



**CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT FUND PLAN**

**FOR \_\_\_\_\_**

**FFY 2008-2009**

This Plan describes the CCDF program to be conducted by the State for the period 10/1/07 – 9/30/09. As provided for in the applicable statutes and regulations, the Lead Agency has the flexibility to modify this program at any time, including changing the options selected or described herein.

The official text of the applicable laws and regulations govern, and the Lead Agency acknowledges its responsibility to adhere to them regardless of the fact that, for purposes of simplicity and clarity, the specific provisions printed herein are sometimes paraphrases of, or excerpts and incomplete quotations from, the full text.

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Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 165 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection of information.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

**(Form ACF 118 Approved OMB Number: 0970-0114 expires 06/30/2009)**

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**AMENDMENTS LOG**

Child Care and Development Services Plan for  
For the period: 10/1/07 – 9/30/09

SECTION AMENDED	EFFECTIVE/ PROPOSED EFFECTIVE DATE	DATE SUBMITTED TO ACF	DATE APPROVED BY ACF

**Instructions:**

- 1) Lead Agency completes the first 3 columns and sends a photocopy of this Log (showing the latest amendment sent to ACF) and the amended section(s) to the ACF Regional contact. A copy of the Log, showing the latest amendment pending in ACF, is retained in the Lead Agency's Plan.
- 2) ACF completes column 4 and returns a photocopy of the Log to the grantee.
- 3) The Lead Agency replaces this page in the Plan with the copy of the Log received from ACF showing the approval date.

Note: This process depends on repeated subsequent use of the same Log page over the life of the Plan. At any time the Log should reflect all amendments, both approved and pending in ACF. The Lead Agency is advised to retain those "old" plan pages that are superseded by amendments in a separate appendix to its Plan.

**PART 1**  
**ADMINISTRATION**

The agency shown below has been designated by the Chief Executive Officer of the State (or Territory), to represent the State (or Territory) as the Lead Agency. The Lead Agency agrees to administer the program in accordance with applicable Federal laws and regulations and the provisions of this Plan, including the assurances and certifications appended hereto. (658D, 658E)

**1.1 Lead Agency Information** (as designated by State chief executive officer)

Name of Lead Agency: **South Carolina Department of Social Services (SCDSS)**  
Address of Lead Agency: **Post Office Box 1520; Columbia, South Carolina 29202-1520**  
Name and Title of the Lead Agency's Chief Executive Officer:  
**Kathleen M. Hayes, Ph. D. State Director**  
Phone Number: **803-898-7360**  
Fax Number: **803-898-7277**  
E-Mail Address: **KMHayes@dss.state.sc.us**  
Web Address for Lead Agency (if any): **<http://www.state.sc.us/dss/>**

**1.2 State Child Care (CCDF) Contact Information** (day-to-day contact)

Name of the State Child Care Contact (CCDF): **Leigh Bolick**  
Title of State Child Care Contact: **Director of Child Care Services**  
Address: **Post Office Box 1520;  
Columbia, South Carolina 29202-1520**  
Phone Number: **803-898-7134**  
Fax Number: **803-898-7625**  
E-Mail Address: **lbolick@dss.state.sc.us**  
Phone Number for child care subsidy program information (for the public): **803-898-2570**  
Web Address for child care subsidy program information (for the public):  
**<http://www.state.sc.us/dss/>**

**1.3 Estimated Funding**

The Lead Agency estimates that the following amounts will be available for child care services and related activities during the 1-year period: October 1, 2007 through September 30, 2008. (§98.13(a))

CCDF: **\$70,215,230**  
Federal TANF Transfer to CCDF: **\$-0-**  
Direct Federal TANF Spending on Child Care: **\$-0-**  
State CCDF Maintenance of Effort Funds: **\$4,085,269**  
State Matching Funds: **\$10,176,148**  
Total Funds Available: **\$84,476,647**

#### 1.4 **Estimated Administration Cost**

The Lead Agency estimates that the following amount (and percentage) of Federal CCDF and State Matching Funds will be used to administer the program (not to exceed 5 percent):  
**\$4,019,569 (5%).** (658E(c) (3), §§98.13(a), 98.52)

#### 1.5 **Administration of the Program**

Does the Lead Agency directly administer and implement all services, programs and activities funded under the CCDF Act, including those described in Part 5.1 – Activities & Services to Improve the Quality and Availability of Child Care, Quality Earmarks and Set-Aside?

☐

Yes.

☒

No. If no, use the table below to **identify** the name and type of agency that delivers services and activities. (If the Lead Agency performs the task, mark “n/a” in the box under “Agency.” If more than one agency performs the task, identify all agencies in the box under “Agency,” and **indicate** in the box to the right whether each is a non-government entity.)

Service/Activity	Agency	Non-Government Entity (see Guidance for definition)	
Determines individual eligibility:			
a) TANF families	NA	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
b) Non-TANF families	NA	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Assists parents in locating care	SC Child Care Resource and Referral Network	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Makes the provider payment	NA	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Quality activities	See 5.1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Other:		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

If the Lead Agency uses outside agencies to deliver services and activities, **describe** how the Lead Agency maintains overall control.

**When there are subrecipients, a risk assessment is conducted for the development of a monitoring plan which is attached to each contract or grant. The risk assessment determines the level and scope of the monitoring plan. For low-risk contracts/grants, program staff review all deliverables to ensure that they are received in a timely manner and work with the subrecipient to assure that all reports are received as specified in the contract/grant. Program staff maintain regular contact with the subrecipient to provide technical assistance and to discuss barriers prohibiting completion of the tasks in the scope of work. Regular contact includes face-to-face meetings and telephone/electronic/fax contacts as appropriate to ensure contract/grant compliance. Program staff review and approve all invoices submitted pertaining to contracts/grants prior to submission to fiscal staff for payment. For higher risk contracts/grants, all of the above activities are conducted, along with periodic on-site program reviews by program staff.**

**The following are examples of language from a typical contract or grant and demonstrate how SCDSS maintains overall control when services and activities are provided through other agencies:**

- All expenditures must be supported by documentation to establish that such expenditures have been made in accordance with the CCDF Act of 1990 (P.L. 101-508) as amended and found at Title VI, Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PWORA) of 1996 (P.L. 104-193), 45 CFR Parts 98 and 99; CCDF Final Rule, and other statutory and regulatory requirements as well as the requirements of this grant.
  - Such information shall be retained by Subrecipient and, upon request, made available to SCDSS for a period of three (3) years after the last payment is made under this Agreement, to include any amendments and/or extensions.
  - SCDSS shall be the single point of contact for any matters concerning the interpretation of CCDF regulations.
  - The Subrecipient agrees to meet the following reporting requirements:
    - A. Submit, within ninety (90) days of the grant start date, a method for project evaluation and a work plan defining project strategies, timelines, and expected project outcomes;
    - B. Submit a quarterly narrative activities report;
    - C. Submit a final project report within ninety (90) days following the end of the grant period to include, but not limited to, the following: project analysis; consisting of strategies utilized, attainments, outcomes, and the achievement of goals as outlined in the grant.
- The following recitals are used in SCDSS CCDF grants and contracts:
- WHEREAS, SCDSS has been designated by the South Carolina Office of the Governor as the single state agency to administer the CCDF in accordance with 45 CFR Parts 98 and 99 (2000, as amended), CCDF; Final Rule. SCDSS is the Lead Agency and is responsible for the CCDF Program.
  - WHEREAS, the United States Department of Health and Human Services (USDHHS) has allocated monies to the State of South Carolina (SC) to fund and implement activities identified in its CCDF application and approval plan.
  - WHEREAS, SCDSS, under authority granted in the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (P.L. 101-508) as amended by P.L. 104-401, P.L. 102-586, P.L. 103-171 and found at Title VI, Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, P.L. 104-193, is authorized to provide a Grant for services which improve the quality and availability of child care and development programs.
  - WHEREAS, SCDSS shall retain overall responsibility for the administration and implementation of the CCDF, as approved by the USDHHS, and shall serve as the single point of contact in resolving program issues.
  - NOW, THEREFORE, the parties to this Grant Agreement, in consideration of the exchange between them of the mutual promises, covenants, and stipulations set forth herein, agree as follows.

#### **1.6 Use of Private Donated Funds**

Will the Lead Agency use private funds to meet a part of the matching requirement of the CCDF pursuant to §98.53(e)(2)?

- ☐ Yes. If yes, are those funds:  
☐ Donated directly to the State?

☐ Donated to a separate entity or entities designated to receive private donated funds?

How many entities are designated to receive private donated fund? \_\_\_\_\_

Provide information below for each entity:

Name:

Address:

Contact:

Type:

☒ No.

### **1.7 Use of State Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) Expenditures for CCDF-Eligible Children**

1.7.1 During this plan period, will State expenditures for Pre-K programs be used to meet any of the CCDF maintenance of effort (MOE) requirement?

☒ Yes, and:

(X) The State assures that its level of effort in full day/full year child care services has not been reduced, pursuant to §98.53(h)(1).

(20%) Estimated percentage of the MOE requirement that will be met with pre-K expenditures.(Not to exceed 20%.)

If the State uses Pre-K expenditures to meet more than 10% of the MOE requirement, the following **describes** how the State will coordinate its Pre-K and child care services to expand the availability of child care (§98.53(h)(4)):

**\*Description Provided in 1.7.3**

☐ No.

1.7.2 During this plan period, will State expenditures for Pre-K programs be used to meet any of the CCDF Matching Fund requirement? (§98.53(h))

☒ Yes, and

(20%) Estimated percentage of the Matching Fund requirement that will be met with pre-K expenditures. (Not to exceed 30%.)

If the State uses Pre-K expenditures to meet more than 10% of the Matching Fund requirement, the following **describes** how the State will coordinate its Pre-K and child care services to expand the availability of child care (§98.53(h)(4)):

**\*Description Provided in 1.7.3**

☐ No.

1.7.3 If the State answered yes to 1.7.1 or 1.7.2, the following **describes** State efforts to ensure that pre-K programs meet the needs of working parents: (§98.53(h)(2))



SCDSS chairs the SC Child Care Coordinating Council (Council) to coordinate the early care and education system. The SC State Department of Education (SDE), Head Start and the SC Office of First Steps to School Readiness (First Steps) are active participants on the Council (see description of First Steps in section 2.3). Maximizing resources and effective planning assists families in accessing affordable quality child care.

SCDSS continues to encourage collaborations that blend funding, including allocations for Pre-K and Head Start funds as well as child care subsidies. SCDSS and SDE will continue to research fiscal and policy issues identified by other states and develop collaborative models for child care wrap-around services on-site and near-site. This close working relationship ensures that Pre-K programs meet the needs of working families.

Pre-K and child care coordination occur at both the state and local levels. At the state level, SDE staff coordinates the certification and reporting of Pre-K expenditures. SCDSS and SDE's Office of Early Childhood Education work with school districts, Head Start programs, and other child care organizations to assess the needs of working parents. School districts are encouraged to provide full-time services or to collaborate with child care providers so that quality care is accessible for the duration of the workday. This may include offering full-day/full-year Pre-K programs as well as care during school holidays and non-traditional hours.

Child care providers are also encouraged to consider collaborative approaches to develop full-day programs; these are often enriched with Even Start and Head Start Pre-K services. Extended child care gives parents additional support so they can work and/or participate in training programs. SCDSS views this effort as a critical workforce development issue.

SCDSS and SDE are working to improve services available to the Pre-K population by supporting a variety of service delivery models for comprehensive services. In addition to child care and Pre-K education, services include activities such as parenting and health screenings. This maximizes resources and promotes collaboration with private child care providers, governmental agencies, and community-based organizations.

The development of the Teen Parent Child Care Voucher Program, which serves low-income parents needing preschool services while attending training and education classes, requires school districts to work in concert with the private child care community as well as Head Start to provide full-day, full-year services. Priority for vouchers is given to infants and toddlers of teen parents who are completing the requirements for a high school credential.

Approximately 26,000 SC children are attending Pre-K on a part-time or full-time basis and may access after-school programs for the remainder of the day. SDE has employed education associates in the Office of Early Childhood Education to work with communities in forging partnerships between schools, Head Start programs, and child care providers. State-funded Pre-K programs receive information about the child care voucher program so they may assist parents in accessing wrap-around services. In addition, Pre-K programs are encouraged to participate in the ABC Child Care Program to be reimbursed for extended-day services.

SCDSS has consolidated the child care eligibility determination process. This is intended to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the services provided to all working parents.

In support of the December 2005 ruling in the case of the State of South Carolina County of Lee Abbeville County School District, et al., vs. The State of South Carolina, et al., in state fiscal year 2006 the South Carolina General Assembly passed a proviso establishing the Child Development Education Pilot Program (CDEPP). The Lead Agency provided information to the entities responsible for implementation of the CDEPP that supports the expansion of child development in public schools and private child care providers in order to increase availability to parents. Examples of information provided are listed below.

CDEPP was made available for the 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 school years on a voluntary basis to focus on the developmental and learning supports that children must have in order to be ready for school and to incorporate parenting education. Funding for the program was appropriated in the amount of \$23,575,680; \$15,717,104 awarded to the South Carolina Department of Education to support work with public school providers to expand child development and \$7,858,576 to the South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness to support work with private child care providers to expand child development. The proviso mandates that the CDEPP shall first be made available to eligible children from the trial districts in the aforementioned case. Additionally, the proviso mandated that the Education Oversight Committee conduct an evaluation of the pilot program and issue a report to the General Assembly by January 1, 2007. Deadlines for subsequent reports are July 2007, January 2008, and July 2008.

The proviso mandates the Lead Agency to do the following:

- Aid the State Department of Education (SDE) and the Office of First Steps to School Readiness in the verification of student enrollment eligibility;
- Maintain a list of all approved public and private providers; and
- Provide the Department of Education, the Office of First Steps, and the Education Oversight Committee information necessary to carry out the requirements of this provision.

In addition to the above mandates, examples of specific information provided include the following:

- Statewide inventory of publicly funded (CCDF) child care programs by provider type.
- Listing of the number of regulated child care programs per county by provider type.
- Inventory of 4-year-old children participating in publicly funded (CCDF) half-day and full-day child care programs by ethnicity and gender and included children that were in Foster Care.
- Total CCDF expenditures for vouchers for 4-year-old children in federal fiscal year 05 and 06
- Three year analysis of CCDF allocations used/planned (2004-2006).
- Overview of the federal requirements and state policy for management of the Advocates for Better Care (ABC) program.

## **1.8 Improper Payments**

### **1.8.1 How does the Lead Agency define improper payments?**

**The Lead Agency uses the Improper Payment Information Act (IPIA) definition of improper payments: “... any payment that should not have been made or that was made in an incorrect amount under statutory, contractual, or other legally applicable requirement. Incorrect amounts are overpayments and underpayments (including inappropriate denials of payment or service).”**

### **1.8.2 Has your State implemented strategies to prevent, measure, identify, reduce and/or collect improper payments? (§98.60(i), §98.65, §98.67)**

☒ Yes, and these strategies are:

☐ No. If no, are there plans underway to determine and implement such strategies?

☐ Yes, and these planned strategies are:

☐ No.

**There are multiple ways for clients, child care providers, and the general public to report improper, erroneous, or potentially fraudulent child care payments:**

- **1-800 customer service telephone line**
- **1-800 child care complaint line**
- **E-mail contact information from SCDSS website [www.dss.state.sc.us](http://www.dss.state.sc.us)**
- **U.S. Mail**
- **Self-reporting. The Provider Business Procedures Manual instructs directors to indicate on their payment forms when they believe they are being paid incorrectly.**

**ABC Child Care staff make appropriate adjustments to the Service Voucher Logs, ensuring that proper payments are made to providers. Discrepancy reports, such as provider capacity and excessive absence reports, are monitored weekly to ensure that clients and providers are participating within the child care program guidelines. An active child care caseload report is sent to county eligibility workers on a monthly basis to ensure that clients remain eligible for the program.**

**ABC Program staff conduct on-site visits to those child care providers who voluntarily meet standards above the state’s minimum licensing requirements. The staff performs unannounced reviews of child care records and monitor compliance. Suspected fraud is reported to auditing staff.**

**Auditing staff conduct random reviews of all regulated child care providers. An average of 14 audits are conducted per month (approximately 10% of enrolled, licensed, and registered child care providers annually). Reviews of child care attendance records and payment histories ensure that providers are serving and submitting payments for eligible children only. Special audits are conducted as requested when fraud is suspected.**

**If an improper payment is identified the following actions are taken:**

- **Recoupment information is keyed into an automated adjustment system that allows future child care payments to be reduced until all overpayments have been recovered. At this time, recoupments are collected only from child care providers; however, SCDSS is exploring options for recouping monies from clients.**
- **If the child care provider is not owed any further child care payments, the outstanding debt is sent to the Accounts Receivable Department for collection. The following actions are taken if an improper payment is referred to Accounts Receivable:**
  - **A letter is sent to the provider requesting full payment within 30 days,**
  - **Providers are allowed to request payment arrangements,**
  - **Providers are informed of the policy considering 90 days same as cash for balances of \$300 or less,**
  - **Providers are informed that, for balances over \$300, providers may make payments over a 12 month period with interest accrual (prime plus 2%).**

**The Lead Agency is currently in the process of reviewing all policies and procedures related to improper payments and will be implementing strategies during this plan period for strengthening the processes for preventing, identifying, reducing and/or collecting improper payments made to providers, as well as initiating policies and procedures for improper payments made on behalf of clients. Upon finalization of these policies and procedures, the ABC Policy Manual will be revised to include the new processes and staff will be trained on implementing the new processes.**

## PART 2 DEVELOPING THE CHILD CARE PROGRAM

### **2.1 Consultation and Coordination**

- 2.1.1 Lead Agencies are required to *consult* with appropriate agencies and *coordinate* with other Federal, State, local, tribal (if applicable) and private agencies providing child care and early childhood development services (§98.12, §98.14(a),(b), §98.16(d)). **Indicate** the entities with which the Lead Agency has consulted or coordinated (as defined below), by checking the appropriate box(es) in the following table.

*Consultation* involves the meeting with or otherwise obtaining input from an appropriate agency in the development of the State Plan. At a minimum, Lead Agencies must consult with representatives of general purpose local governments (noted by the asterisk in the chart below).

*Coordination* involves the coordination of child care and early childhood development service delivery, including efforts to coordinate across multiple entities, both public and private (for instance, in connection with a State Early Childhood Comprehensive System (SECCS) grant or infant-toddler initiative). At a minimum, Lead Agencies must coordinate with (1) other Federal, State, local, Tribal (if applicable), and/or private agencies responsible for providing child care and early childhood development services, (2) public health (including the agency responsible for immunizations and programs that promote children's emotional and mental health), (3) employment services / workforce development, (4) public education, (5) Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and (6) any Indian Tribes in the State receiving CCDF funds (noted by the asterisks in the chart below).

	<b>Consultation in Development of the Plan</b>	<b>Coordination with Service Delivery</b>
Other Federal, State, local, Tribal (if applicable), and private agencies providing child care and early childhood development services.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> *
Public health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> *
Employment services / workforce development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> *
Public education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> *
TANF	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> *
Indian Tribes/Tribal Organizations, when such entities exist within the boundaries of the State	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Representatives of local government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> *	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
State/Tribal agency (agencies) responsible for:		

	Consultation in Development of the Plan	Coordination with Service Delivery
State pre-kindergarten programs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Head Start programs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Programs that promote inclusion for children with special needs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Emergency preparedness	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other (See guidance):	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

\* *Required.*

**For each box checked above, (a) identify the agency providing the service and (b) describe the consultation and coordination efforts.** Descriptions must be provided for any consultation or coordination required by statute or regulation.

If you have prepared an emergency preparedness plan related to your child care and early childhood development services, attach it as **Attachment 2.1.1.**

The Lead Agency has partnered with many agencies and programs to link existing resources, build new resources, avoid duplication, and meet the needs that are critical to building an effective early care and education system. This system includes 4 components: Regulations and Standards, Quality Improvement, Professional Development, and Community/Family Involvement. The SC Early Care and Education System partners include: 1800 child care providers, the SC Center for Child Care Career Development, the Office of Early Childhood Education, Head Start, First Steps, the technical college system, colleges and universities, child care resource and referral agencies, Success By Six®, United Way, early care and education professional associations, and foundations. SCDSS embarks upon many initiatives to promote child care quality, improve technical assistance, and expand professional development opportunities. In each and every instance, we have jointly convened with a statewide network of partners and child care providers.

The Lead Agency presides over the SC Child Care Coordinating Council (Council), created by Executive Order 2001-23 of the Governor of SC, whose purpose is to maximize child care expertise in the state. The Council allows stakeholders a forum to share information, exchange ideas, provide input on state plans and develop and coordinate strategies to improve the child care system in SC. The Council includes a representative from the following agencies or organizations in addition to SCDSS: SDE, SC Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC), SC Department of Disabilities and Special Needs (SCDDSN), SC Head Start Collaboration Office, First Steps and the Office of the Governor. Additional members represent local United Way/Success By 6® programs, Voices for SC's Children (a child care advocacy organization), faith-based community service organizations, CCR&R agencies, and child care providers from local communities. The Council was consulted in the development of the CCDF Plan. Individual and/or small group meetings were held with the Catawba Indian Nation, Head Start, SCDSS Family Independence (TANF) and Child Care Regulatory departments.

SCDSS works with the SC Employment Security Commission to assess the needs of working parents and meet those needs by promoting care during non-traditional work hours as well as full day, full year child care.

SCDSS provides funding for the SC CCR&R Network, which provides information for parents, child care providers and communities about local child care services; the Network will be expanding upon currently available consumer information. (See discussion at 2.3)

The Lead Agency has engaged in a collaborative partnership with South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness for the provision of training and consulting services aimed at strengthening child maltreatment prevention initiatives. This training and consultation will be provided by Zero To Three - National Center for Infants and Toddlers staff. It is focused on supporting child care professionals to help reduce the risk of abuse and neglect through their natural relationships with families. It particularly focuses on infant-toddler child care, since research shows that the youngest children are the most vulnerable to child maltreatment. Specifically, the Lead Agency made available the curricula that is used for the training, *Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect: Parent Provider Partnerships in Child Care*. Participants attending the training represent a cross-section of public and private agencies that provide training and/or technical assistance to child care providers, staff providing child care regulatory oversight, those promoting child advocacy initiatives, as well as personnel located in public school districts and the technical college system.

The Head Start Association is an active partner in child care services and a participant on the Council. SCDSS partners with Head Start to extend the day, provide summer programs, and reduce the administrative barriers that prevent full utilization of the CCDF funds set aside to expand Head Start services. In November 2005, the Head Start Collaboration Office transitioned to the Lead Agency. This office is mandated to collaborate in eight priority areas: Child care and preschool, welfare, health care, education, community services, family literacy, activities relating to disabilities, and homelessness. Its purpose is to enhance the capacity of Head Start and other programs to improve outcomes and opportunities for children. The Head Start Collaboration Office Director and Head Start administrators were consulted in development of the CCDF Plan.

The Lead Agency also coordinates with SDE, Head Start, the Catawba Indian Nation, First Steps, child care providers, and others in the development of the Good Start, Grow Smart initiative. SCDSS collaborates with SDE and First Steps regarding Pre-K programs, in order to meet the needs of working parents. The two entities also work together regarding before- and after-school child care and early childhood development services. The SC After-School Alliance is included in planning for before- and after-school care.

SCDSS, in conjunction with early care and education partners, implemented a statewide technical assistance system. The system integrates on-site technical assistance into daily practice in early care and education settings. It includes core knowledge/competencies, uniformity of technical assistance, coordination/integration with state child care licensing requirements and quality standards, and accountability. Seven regions used by First Steps were adopted across the state. Currently, a pilot is underway with two regions to work more closely to collect information about the provision of technical assistance and support needed to strengthen the quality of delivery.

SCDSS is the Lead Agency for TANF and is committed to meeting the child care needs of all Welfare Reform (Family Independence) clients as well as those transitioning off the welfare program due to employment.

Currently, the Lead Agency has a contractual agreement (of more than 3 years) with the University of South Carolina's School of Medicine – Center for Disability Resources for the provision of training and technical assistance to child care providers currently serving or interested in serving children with different needs. Center staff has developed a Monograph Series that includes an in-depth review of developmental deficiencies and guidance for working with young children. The ABC Special Needs Program helps parents locate quality special needs care and has recently expanded the services it provides.

The Lead Agency is interested in responding to the National Professional Development Center on Inclusion call for applications from states with a need to systematically improve efforts to better prepare personnel to work effectively in inclusive preschool settings. Applicants are required to assemble key state colleagues representing agencies, organizations, institutions of higher learning, and families to create a system of high quality, cross-agency professional development for early childhood personnel to support inclusion. To that end, the Lead Agency is serving as facilitator to convene a workgroup to develop a state plan and application in anticipation of the Center's next call for applications. The initial round of applications was due in April 2007 and the next round will be due April 2008. Documentation of support from the Head Start Collaboration Director, the Part B – Section 619 Coordinator, and the head of the state's Child Care Agency, is required.

SCDSS is currently developing new strategies for Emergency Preparedness across various program areas. One of the most notable strategies is administering benefits through emergency EBT cards. Child Care subsidies are not currently paid through EBT debit cards and has therefore not been included in this strategy. However, research has begun regarding feasible options for incorporating Emergency Preparedness strategies into child care.

- 2.1.2 State Plan for Early Childhood Program Coordination. *Good Start, Grow Smart* encourages States to develop a plan for coordination across early childhood programs. **Indicate** which of the following best describes the current status of the State's efforts in this area. **Note: Check only ONE.**

- ☐ **Planning.** Indicate whether steps are under way to develop a plan. If so, describe the time frames for completion and/or implementation, the steps anticipated, and how the plan is expected to support early language, literacy, pre-reading and early math concepts.
- ☐ **Developing.** A plan is being drafted.  
The draft is included as **Attachment 2.1.2.**
- ☐ **Developed.** A plan has been written but has not yet been implemented. The plan is included as **Attachment 2.1.2.**
- ☐ **Implementing.** A plan has been written and is now in the process of being implemented. The plan is included as **Attachment 2.1.2.**
- ☒ **Other (describe):**

**Describe** the progress made by the State planning for coordination across early childhood programs since the date of submission of the 2006-2007 State Plan.



The Council established the Good Start, Grow Smart Task Force in 2003. The Task Force consists of representatives from SCDSS (CCDF, SSBG, Licensing), SDE, First Steps (the Center for Child Care Career Development, and T.E.A.C.H.®), Head Start, SC Child Care Association (private for-profit child care), Voices for SC's Children, DHEC (the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Project Director) and the Catawba Indian Nation Tribal CCDF administrator.

During the previous plan period, the Task Force has continued to work toward alignment of the Early Learning Standards (ELS) to the K-12 Standards, some of which have been under cyclical review by the State Department of Education (SDE). Those reviews have been delayed at SDE, which in turn have delayed final completion of the ELS. Progress has been made on 9 thirty-minute training videos which will accompany the ELS and formatting of the ELS for distribution to the early childhood community statewide. Funding has been coordinated for the production and distribution of the ELS and accompanying videos among SCDSS, SDE, and Head Start. Following the completion of the standards for the 3-5 ELS in 2007-2008, standards for 0-3 will be developed to link the state's adopted Program for Infant Toddler Care (PITC) philosophy to the ELS for 3-5 year olds to create a seamless statewide system for children zero to five years.

**Indicate** whether there is an entity that is responsible for ensuring that such coordination occurs. Indicate the four or more early childhood programs and/or funding streams that are coordinated and describe the nature of the coordination.

The Council addresses objectives and time frames for the Good Start, Grow Smart Task Force in its strategic plan. The Lead Agency is responsible for ensuring that this coordination occurs. The early childhood programs and funding streams include: ABC program (CCDF funds), Office of Early Childhood (SDE-4K funding), Head Start, and First Steps (state funds). The representatives of the Task Force meet regularly to carry out the goals of Good Start, Grow Smart. The inter-agency work group has jointly developed voluntary guidelines for children ages 3-5 that are in alignment with current State K-12 standards in the domains of literacy, pre-reading, language arts and numeracy. However, language arts and numeracy standards have been under cyclical review of the SDE and the Task Force has awaited those revisions to insure alignment of the ELS to the SDE K-12 standards. The Task Force has continued to move forward on joint plans to coordinate and implement the professional development and training of child care teachers, providers, and administrators as well as public school teachers and Head Start providers. This coordination has included joint funding of the 9 videos and joint funding for training materials.

**Describe** the results or expected results of this coordination. Discuss how these results relate to the development and implementation of the State's early learning guidelines, plans for professional development, and outcomes for children.

The work of the Good Start, Grow Smart Task Force is guided by the Council. The expected results of this coordination include the development of early learning guidelines for 3-year olds. The learning guidelines for language and literacy, numeracy, approaches to learning, physical development and social-emotional development have been completed to align with the existing SDE K-12 Standards as discussed above. The new K-12 Standard revisions will be reviewed and incorporated into the ELS to assure alignment. Once the alignment is complete, the new ELS will be incorporated into required training for the new Level A of the ABC Child Care Program Standards and will be voluntary for all other ABC child care programs. Other programs

mandating compliance will be Head Start and the State Department of Education for early childhood programs. Training for the early childhood community statewide will include the use of the 9 training videos designed to accompany the ELS training materials made possible through an SDE grant in partnership with SCETV.

Describe how the State's plan supports or will support continued coordination among the programs. Are changes anticipated in the plan?

The Council and the Good Start, Grow Smart Task Force will continue to coordinate with all stakeholders toward the outlined goals outlined and will make changes in the plan as necessary. The state is not anticipating any changes.

## **2.2 Public Hearing Process**

Describe the Statewide public hearing process held to provide the public an opportunity to comment on the provision of child care services under this Plan. (658D(b)(1)(C), §98.14(c)) At a minimum, the description must provide:

Date(s) of statewide notice of public hearing: **June 5, 2007**

Manner of notifying the public about the statewide hearing: **The notice was posted on the agency's website and sent to the members of the Child Care Coordinating Council.**

Date(s) of public hearing(s): **June 25, 2007**

Hearing site(s): **SCDSS, 1535 Confederate Avenue, Columbia, SC, Room 202**

How the content of the plan was made available to the public in advance of the public hearing(s): **The plan was posted on the agency's website and sent to the members of the Child Care Coordinating Council.**

There were no public comments resulting from this process.

## **2.3 Public-Private Partnerships**

Does the Lead Agency conduct or plan to conduct activities to encourage public-private partnerships that promote private-sector involvement in meeting child care needs?

☒ Yes. If yes, **describe** these activities or planned activities, including the results or expected results.

☐ No.

- **The Lead Agency sets aside funds to expand the hours of care and extend school-based programs from 9 months to 12 months for before-/after-school services to school age children to allow parents to work.**
- **Child care vouchers are made available to parents, with priority for services to teen parents, so they can obtain a high school diploma or GED only.**
- **DSS provides child care vouchers for women living in shelters to escape domestic violence situations to include clients who are receiving services from a state-funded domestic violence program.**
- **SCDSS is implementing selected recommendations from its participation in the SC Quality Early Care and Education Task Force study, linked to a national study to**

**analyze the cost and impacts of alternative financing methods for high quality early care and education. Recommendations for client co-pay and rates of payment are under review to assure that families funded for child care under the ABC program receive strong opportunities for high quality child care services.**

- **Head Start and Early Head Start grantees are allocated CCDF funds to meet the needs of working parents by extending the hours of operation and providing full-day care through the summer months. Head Start programs are included in the range of options available to parents as they choose a child care provider.**
- **The Early Childhood Summits, a key collaboration with Head Start, have addressed the professional development of the early childhood workforce. This ongoing initiative with higher education institutions in South Carolina has led to an infant-toddler credential at the technical college level, accreditation of technical college early childhood departments through NAEYC (among the first in the nation), and beginning articulation between the technical colleges and four year institutions for B.A. degrees in early childhood education. SC State University has adopted this model; articulation is currently under consideration at a number of other South Carolina four year institutions (it is currently under review at the University of South Carolina) and will become an issue of increasing importance as educational requirements for the early childhood community increase. Another Early Childhood Summit of the higher education community focusing on Core Knowledge will be held in 2007-2008 to receive and consider the Core Knowledge proposal from a Professional Development Committee charged with developing that proposal. This Summit will be sponsored jointly by SCDSS, the Head Start Collaboration Office, and the SC Center for Child Care Career Development. That proposal has been developed and is under review by a national expert.**
- **The Lead Agency contracts with First Steps for a statewide career development system for child caregivers. The SC Center for Child Care Career Development (CCCCD) administers the SC Early Childhood Credential and salary bonus program, as well as the training registry system for trainers, caregivers, and directors. This career development program is the cornerstone of professional development for the ABC Child Care Program. Expected results are a quality educated and trained workforce and accountability for training efforts.**
- **During 2006-2007, the B.A. model for T.E.A.C.H. was added with the articulation between the technical colleges and South Carolina State University. Additional articulation agreements are expected in 2007-2008 with the growing accreditation of the early childhood departments of the technical colleges. All but two of the sixteen technical colleges statewide have either completed the accreditation process or are currently in the process. Expected results are increased opportunities for caregivers and directors who want to progress professionally to the B.A. level and a more educated early childhood workforce.**
- **The Lead Agency contracts with a statewide CCR&R Network, composed of CCR&R throughout the state, to provide linkages between parents looking for child care, child care providers seeking training and technical assistance, and policy makers looking for information on child care supply and demand. The CCR&R Network is responsible for providing comprehensive resource and referral services throughout the state. Through**

consolidating R&R services, the Lead Agency can ensure statewide coverage.

- To expand the availability of child care scholarships, SCDSS collaborates with First Steps to administer, through the ABC Child Care Voucher System, the First Steps County Partnerships' child care scholarships. These scholarships are available to families with children under age 6. The expected result is improved school readiness among this population. First Steps has developed a series of outcome measures to evaluate the scholarship program.
- The Lead Agency provides funds to the University of South Carolina (USC) Center for Disability Resources to provide services for special needs children. USC consults with providers caring for children meeting the special needs criteria defined by SCDSS. The initiative focuses on educating providers about issues specific to special needs children. USC is also cultivating providers throughout the state to serve as regional mentors to other facilities in their communities. All training and consultation activities undertaken will result in increased access to child care for special needs children. The ABC Special Needs Program also assists parents in finding quality special needs care, and SCDSS has recently expanded the current program to serve more families and providers.
- SCDSS supports the USC Infant/Toddler Leadership Initiative that seeks to improve quality education and training for infant/toddler caregivers statewide. Graduate courses, with certification through the nationally known WestEd Program for Infant/Toddler Care in Modules I-IV, have been offered by USC. The Children's Center at USC (formerly Gateway Center of Excellence) acts as a demonstration site for infant and toddler care and a focal point for continued state leadership education and training. The USC Research Center provides a cohesive set of activities designed to improve quality child care for all children through course work and train-the-trainer initiatives. The activities are designed to build a universal base of knowledge among those already in the field working with child care providers and build on existing resources. A new PITC Outreach initiative is underway to provide onsite training and technical assistance directly to child care programs over an extended period to assure sustainability. A new technical assistance and development project for an electronic system of data collection and assessment of infants and toddlers will be piloted. A cohort of early childhood leaders are working toward a M.Ed. in Early Childhood Education through scholarship funding provided by SCDSS.
- The Lead Agency played an instrumental role in the development and implementation of the South Carolina Early Care and Education Technical Assistance Network. The Network integrates on-site technical assistance into daily practice in child care and other early care and education settings. It outlines core knowledge/competencies, processes for coordination/integration with state child care regulatory requirements and quality standards, uniformity of technical assistance, and accountability. The Lead Agency continues to provide support to technical assistance providers across the state primarily through professional development and service coordination. The Lead Agency has entered into a contractual agreement with the South Carolina Afterschool Alliance to modify and expand the system to include criteria regarding the provision of technical assistance in school-age programs. Staff from the Lead Agency is working with the Alliance and other school-age care partners on this initiative. The Alliance contract also provides staff for expansion of technical assistance to school-age care providers.

**The Lead Agency has entered into a contractual agreement with Trident Technical College (TTC) to expand the provision of school-age care education through the technical college system. TTC has lead responsibility to ensure that coursework and class materials/activities are uniform and made available to all technical colleges desiring to provide school-age care coursework. Train-the-trainer sessions will be conducted with instructors to ensure uniform teaching. TTC staff will also conduct regional advocacy forums with parents of young children to raise awareness regarding quality afterschool programming.**

**PART 3**  
**CHILD CARE SERVICES OFFERED**

**3.1 Description of Child Care Services**

**3.1.1 Certificate Payment System**

**Describe** the overall child care certificate process, including, at a minimum:

- (1) a description of the form of the certificate (98.16(k));

**For non-welfare reform clients:**

To help parents pay for child care services through the Lead Agency's automated management system (the ABC Child Care Voucher System), qualified clients are issued an eligibility letter. This letter reflects the parents' name, address, names of the child(ren) who are approved for services, types of care, and number of weeks of care approved. Upon receipt of this letter, clients have 15 calendar days in which to select a provider.

Once a provider is selected, the client is sent an automated authorization/connection letter, which reflects the parents' names, address, names of the child(ren) authorized, fee amount per child/per week, selected provider, provider's billing rate, start and stop dates of care, and number of weeks of care authorized. A copy of the ABC Child Care Program authorization/connection letter is also sent to the provider chosen by the client. If either the client or the provider has questions, they may contact ABC Control Center staff through the 1-800 numbers.

**For Welfare Reform Clients:**

SCDSS county Support Service Specialists (SSS) determine eligibility for welfare reform participants, children in foster care, or children receiving child protective services. Before child care services become effective, the client and provider must obtain written authorization from SCDSS. All child care services authorized by SCDSS staff must be entered into the ABC Child Care Voucher System for payment. The Voucher System will also send written authorization as described above. Welfare reform clients are counseled by SCDSS staff regarding their provider of choice. The SCDSS staff notes the name of the provider, FEIN or SSN, children eligible for care, and the start date of care. Based on this information, ABC Child Care staff fund and make connections in the automated system.

Authorizations are issued for up to 52 weeks a year. Authorized clients also receive a Client Rights and Responsibilities Fact Sheet, an explanation of child care options, the Parent Handbook outlining the child care program's rules and procedures, and a listing of providers in their county.

Parents may change child care providers by furnishing the new provider's name to the ABC Child Care Control Center via the 1-800 phone lines. The new provider is contacted by agency staff to complete the transfer. Parents choosing self-arranged care through a relative or friend must complete a self-certification form documenting that certain health and safety requirements have been met.

- (2) a description of how the certificate program permits parents to choose from a variety of child care settings by explaining how a parent moves from receipt of the certificate to choice of the provider; (658E(c)(2)(A)(iii), 658P(2), 98.2, 98.30(c)(4) & (e)(1) & (2))

When choosing child care arrangements, parents may select from a wide range of options that best meets their family's needs. Once eligibility is determined, an eligibility packet is mailed to the client. Upon receipt of the packet, the client has 15 calendar days to select a provider. The client then gives the provider the connection card, and the provider mails the completed connection card to the ABC Child Care Control Center. Upon receipt of the connection card, staff will then authorize the client and the provider in the voucher system and the automated authorization/connection letter is sent. The welfare reform client's provider of choice is documented in the automated system by the SSS. A connection card from the provider is not necessary unless the client transfers to another provider after initial selection.

- (3) if the Lead Agency is also providing child care services through grants and contracts, estimate the proportion of §98.50 services available through certificates versus grants/contracts, and explain how it ensures that parents offered child care services are given the option of receiving a child care certificate. (98.30(a) & (b)) This may be expressed in terms of dollars, number of slots, or percentages of services.

**Approximately 88% of the projected allocation is expected to be used for subsidies and related non-direct services. 100% is expected to be paid through the voucher system which improves the efficiency of the payment and data collection system.**

**Attach** a copy of your eligibility worker's manual, policy handbook, or other printed guidelines for administering the child care subsidy program as **Attachment 3.1.1**. If these materials are available on the web, the State may provide the appropriate Web site address in lieu of attaching hard copies to the Plan.

Note: Eligibility worker's manuals, policy handbooks, or other printed guidelines for administering a child care subsidy program will be used for reference purposes only. Documents provided by Lead Agencies pursuant to this section will not be uniformly or comprehensively reviewed and will not be considered part of the Plan. All information required to be part of the Plan must continue to be set forth in the Plan.

- 3.1.2 In addition to offering certificates, does the Lead Agency also have grants or contracts for child care slots?

☐ Yes, and the following **describes** the types of child care services, the process for accessing grants or contracts, and the range of providers that will be available through grants or contracts: (658A(b)(1), 658P(4), §§98.16(g)(1), 98.30(a)(1) & (b))

☒ No.

- 3.1.3 The Lead Agency must allow for in-home care but may limit its use. Does the Lead Agency limit the use of in-home care in any way?

☒ Yes, and the limits and the reasons for those limits are: (§§98.16(g)(2), 98.30(e)(1)(iv))

☐ No.

**In-home child care will be approved only when the family has three or more children in the home who require care. An in-home provider must be at least 21 years of age and meet basic health and**

safety standards. If the parent chooses an in-home provider who is related to the child(ren), the arrangement may be approved. A relative provider must be related to the child in one of the following ways:

1. An aunt or uncle (first generation only)
2. A Sibling who does not reside in the home
3. A Grandparent
4. A Great-grandparent.

3.1.4 Are child care services provided through certificates, grants and/or contracts offered throughout the State? (658E(a), §98.16(g)(3))

☒ Yes.

☐ No, and the following are the localities (political subdivisions) and the services that are not offered:

### **3.2 Payment Rates for the Provision of Child Care**

The statute at 658E(c)(4) and the regulations at §98.43(b)(1) require the Lead Agency to establish payment rates for child care services that ensure eligible children equal access to comparable care.

These rates are provided as **Attachment 3.2A**.

The attached payment rates were or will be effective as of **October 1, 2007**.

**Provide** a summary of the facts relied on by the State to determine that the attached rates are sufficient to ensure equal access to comparable child care services provided to children whose parents are not eligible to receive child care assistance under the CCDF and other governmental programs. Include, at a minimum:

- The month and year when the local market rate survey(s) was completed: **March 2007**. (§98.43(b)(2))
- A copy of the **Market Rate Survey instrument** and a **summary of the results** of the survey are provided as **Attachment 3.2B**. At a minimum, this summary should include a description of the sample population, data source, the type of methodology used, response rate, description of analyses, and key findings (**See Guidance for additional information.**)
- Does the Lead Agency use its **current** Market Rate Survey (a survey completed within the allowable time period –10/1/05 -9/30/07) to set payment rates?  
☒ Yes.  
☐ No.

**At what percentile of the current Market Rate Survey is the State rate ceiling set?** If you do not use your current Market Rate Survey to set your rate ceilings or your percentile varies across categories of care (e.g., type of setting, region, age of children), describe and provide the range of variation in relation to your current survey. (**See Guidance for additional information.**)



- How the payment rates are adequate to ensure equal access to the full range of providers based on the results of the above noted local market rate survey (i.e., describe the relationship between the attached payment rates and the market rates observed in the survey): (§98.43(b))

**SCDSS is committed to increasing child care payments, as the budget allows, to better cover the rising costs of child care. The attached maximum rates represent this continued commitment to ensure access to high quality care among providers meeting voluntary standards above state regulatory requirements. The ABC Voucher Program provides financial incentives to recognize and encourage quality through higher payment rates and child care bonuses.**

**The following describes the methodology utilized to establish rates to be effective October 1, 2007:**

- Does the Lead Agency consider any additional facts to determine that its payment rates ensure equal access? (§98.43(d))  
☐ Yes. If, yes, **describe**.  
☒ No.
- Does the State have a tiered reimbursement system (higher rates for child care centers and family child care homes that achieve one or more levels of quality beyond basic licensing requirements)?  
☒ Yes. If yes, **describe**:  
☐ No.

**Since 1992, and to ensure access to high quality care, the Lead Agency has utilized voluntary standards higher than state regulatory requirements in conjunction with a financial incentive to recognize and promote quality. The tiered system consists of three levels of reimbursement:**

- **Level C - participating providers must meet state regulatory requirements applicable to the type of care provided.**
- **Level B - enhanced providers voluntarily agree to meet ABC Child Care Standards higher than state regulatory requirements and undergo unannounced reviews based on those standards.**
- **Level A - criteria representing the highest quality of care recognized in the state.**

**NOTE: Informal care providers are also an option for parents in choosing child care arrangements.**

### **3.3 Eligibility Criteria for Child Care**

#### **3.3.1 Age Eligibility**

Does the Lead Agency allow CCDF-funded child care for children above age 13 but below age 19 who are physically and/or mentally incapable of self-care? (Physical and mental incapacity must then be defined in Appendix 2.) (658E(c)(3)(B), 658P(3), §98.20(a)(1)(ii))

☒ Yes, and the upper age is 19.

☐ No.

Does the Lead Agency allow CCDF-funded child care for children above age 13 but below age 19 who are under court supervision? (658P(3), 658E(c)(3)(B), §98.20(a)(1)(ii))

☒ Yes, and the upper age is 15.

☐ No.

### 3.3.2 Income Eligibility

**Complete** columns (a) and (b) in the matrix below. Complete Columns (c) and (d) **ONLY IF** the Lead Agency is using income eligibility limits lower than 85% of the SMI.

Family Size	(a) 100% of State Median Income (SMI) (\$/month)	(b) 85% of State Median Income (SMI) (\$/month) [Multiply (a) by 0.85]	IF APPLICABLE	
			Income Level, lower than 85% SMI, if used to limit eligibility	
			(c) \$/month	(d) % of SMI [Divide (c) by (a), multiply by 100]
1	2,510	2,134	1,276	51%
2	3,283	2,791	1,711	52%
3	4,055	3,447	2,146	53%
4	4,828	4,104	2,581	53%
5	5,600	4,760	3,016	54%

If the Lead Agency does not use the SMI from the most current year, **indicate** the year used:

If applicable, indicate the date on which the eligibility limits detailed in column (c) became or will become effective:

How does the Lead Agency define “income” for the purposes of eligibility? Describe and/or include information as **Attachment 3.3.2**. (§§98.16(g)(5), 98.20(b))

- Is any income deducted or excluded from total family income (for instance, work or medical expenses; child support paid to, or received from, other households; Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments)?

☒ Yes. If yes, **describe** what type of income is deducted or excluded from total family income. **\*See Attachment 3.3.2 for Description**

☐ No.

- Is the income of all family members included?

☐ Yes.

☒ No. If no, **describe** whose income is excluded for purposes of eligibility determination. **\*See Attachment 3.3.2 for Description**

### 3.3.3 Eligibility Based Upon Receiving or Needing to Receive Protective Services

Does the State choose to provide child care to children in protective services, as defined in Appendix 2? (§§98.16(f)(7), 98.20(a)(3)(ii)(A) & (B))

☒ Yes. **However this is funded through SSBG**

☐ No.

Has the Lead Agency elected to waive, on a case-by-case basis, the fee and income eligibility requirements for cases in which children receive, or need to receive, protective services, as defined in Appendix 2? (658E(c)(3)(B), 658P(3)(C)(ii), §98.20(a)(3)(ii)(A))

☐ Yes.

☐ No.

☒ Not applicable. CCDF-funded child care is not provided in cases in which children receive, or need to receive, protective services.

Does the State choose to provide CCDF-funded child care to children in foster care whose foster care parents are not working, or who are not in education/training activities? (§§98.20(a)(3)(ii), 98.16(f)(7))

☐ Yes. (**NOTE:** This means that for CCDF purposes the State considers these children to be in protective services.)

☒ No.

#### 3.3.4 Additional Eligibility Conditions

Has the Lead Agency established additional eligibility conditions? (658E(c)(3)(B), §98.16(g)(5), §98.20(b))

☒ Yes, and the additional eligibility conditions are: (Terms must be defined in Appendix 2)

☐ No.

### **3.4 Priorities for Serving Children and Families**

3.4.1 Complete the table below regarding eligibility conditions and priority rules. For columns (a) through (d), check box if reply is “Yes”. Leave blank if “No”. Complete column (e) if you check column (d).

Eligibility Category	(a) Guarantee subsidy eligibility	(b) Give priority over other CCDF- eligible families	(c) Same priority as other CCDF- eligible families	(d) Is there a time limit on guarantee or priority?	(e) How long is time limit?
Children with special needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Children in families with very low incomes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Families <u>receiving</u> Temporary Assistance for Needy Families	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

(TANF)					
Families transitioning from TANF	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Families at risk of becoming dependent on TANF	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

3.4.2 **Describe** how the State prioritizes service for the following CCDF-eligible children: (a) children with special needs and (b) children in families with very low incomes. Terms must be defined in Appendix 2. (658E(c)(3)(B))

- **TANF/Welfare Reform participants**
- **Transitioning off TANF**
- **Low-income children with special needs**
- **Low income children needing before- and after-school care**
- **Head Start set-aside**
- **Non-TANF low-income working families (as funding permits)**

3.4.3 **Describe** how CCDF funds will be used to meet the needs of: (a) families receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), (b) those attempting to transition off TANF through work activities, and (c) those at risk of becoming dependent on TANF. (658E(c)(2)(H), Section 418(b)(2) of the Social Security Act, §§98.50(e), 98.16(g)(4))

**Since the passage of the SC Family Independence Act in 1995, the related welfare reform law, and the PRWORA of 1996, the funding priority for ABC Child Care assistance under CCDF has been parents participating in the state's Family Independence Program. When clients transition from TANF, child care assistance under CCDF is available for up to two years for eligible families.**

3.4.4 Has the Lead Agency established additional priority rules that are not reflected in the table completed for Section 3.4.1? (658E(c)(3)(B), §98.16(g)(5), §98.20(b))

- ☐ Yes, and the additional priority rules are: (Terms must be defined in Appendix 2)
- ☒ No.

3.4.5 Does the Lead Agency serve all eligible families that apply?

- ☐ Yes.
- ☒ No.

3.4.6 Does the Lead Agency maintain a waiting list?

- ☐ Yes. If yes, for what populations? Is the waiting list maintained at the State level? Are certain populations given priority for services, and if so, which populations? What methods are employed to keep the list current?
- ☒ No.

### **3.5 Sliding Fee Scale for Child Care Services**

- 3.5.1 A sliding fee scale, which is used to determine each family's contribution to the cost of child care, must vary based on income and the size of the family. A copy of this sliding fee scale for child care services and an explanation of how it works is provided as **Attachment 3.5.1**.

The attached fee scale was or will be effective as of **October 01, 2007**.

Will the Lead Agency use additional factors to determine each family's contribution to the cost of child care? (658E(c)(3)(B), §98.42(b))

- ☐ Yes, and the following **describes** any additional factors that will be used:  
☒ No.

- 3.5.2 Is the sliding fee scale provided in the attachment in response to question 3.5.1 used in all parts of the State? (658E(c)(3)(B))

- ☒ Yes.  
☐ No, and other scale(s) and their effective date(s) provided as **Attachment 3.5.2**.

- 3.5.3 The Lead Agency may waive contributions from families whose incomes are at or below the poverty level for a family of the same size, (§98.42(c)), and the poverty level used by the Lead Agency for a family of 3 is: **\$2,146**.

The Lead Agency must **select ONE** of these options:

- ☐ ALL families with income at or below the poverty level for a family of the same size ARE NOT required to pay a fee.  
☐ ALL families, including those with incomes at or below the poverty level for families of the same size, ARE required to pay a fee.  
☒ SOME families with income at or below the poverty level for a family of the same size ARE NOT required to pay a fee. The following describes these families: **Families receiving TANF and foster children**

- 3.5.4 Does the State allow providers to charge parents the difference between the maximum reimbursement rate and their private pay rate?

- ☒ Yes.  
☐ No.

- 3.5.5 The following is an explanation of how the copayments required by the Lead Agency's sliding fee scale(s) were determined to be affordable: (§98.43(b)(3))

**The Lead Agency has designed a fee scale that includes affordable co-payments for clients. With the exception of clients receiving TANF, and children in foster care funded through SSBG, clients are required to make co-payments based on the sliding fee scale. The fee scale allows clients with incomes up to 150% of poverty to receive services and pay a co-payment of \$6.00, \$11.00, \$14.00, \$17.00, or \$20.00 per week per child based upon family size. Clients are eligible to continue to receive services until their incomes reach 175% of poverty. The fee scale is under review in 2007 in conjunction with the analysis of the 2007 market rate survey.**

**PART 4**  
**PARENTAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**4.1 Application Process / Parental Choice**

- 4.1.1 **Describe** the process for a family to apply for and receive child care services (658D(b)(1)(A), 658E(c)(2)(D) & (3)(B), §§98.16(k), 98.30(a) through (e)). At minimum, the description should include:
- How parents are informed of the availability of child care services and about child care options
  - Where/how applications are made
  - What documentation parents must provide
  - How parents who receive TANF benefits are informed about the exception to individual penalties as described in 4.4
  - Length of eligibility period including variations that relate to the services provided, e.g., through collaborations with Head Start or pre-kindergarten programs
  - Any steps the State has taken to reduce barriers to initial and continuing eligibility for child care subsidies

**Attach** a copy of your parent application for the child care subsidy program. If the application is available on the web, provide the appropriate Web site address (application must still be attached to Plan):

Since the state targets child care funding for participants in the Family Independence (welfare) program, the majority of applications received are from these participants. The Lead Agency determines eligibility for Family Independence (FI) child care services through the state's forty-six county offices and informs applicants of available child care options. The Lead Agency has responsibility for informing TANF clients about the exception to individual penalties. When TANF participants receiving child care services move from the FI program to the first year of transitional child care (TCC1), SCDSS has the option of continuing ABC child care services without requiring a new signed application (seamless eligibility).

Eligibility for low-income working families is determined by the Lead Agency. Historically, the agency has made child care applications available through a variety of sources, including ABC providers, CCR&R agencies, Head Start, Early Head Start, SCDHEC, and tribal Head Start grantees. The Lead Agency has mailed applications directly to parents after an initial pre-screening process.

Families apply for special needs child care services through SCDSS. Families apply for before- and after-school child care services through their local school districts; the applications are subsequently mailed to SCDSS for eligibility determination. Eligibility for all child care services is limited to a twelve-month period.

- 4.1.2 Is the application process different for families receiving TANF?
- ☒ Yes. If yes, **describe** how the process is different:

☐ No.

The regulations at §98.33(b) require the Lead Agency to inform parents who receive TANF benefits about the exception to the individual penalties associated with the work requirement. This

requirement applies to any single custodial parent who has a demonstrated inability to obtain needed child care for a child under 6 years of age.

In fulfilling this requirement, different criteria or definitions are applied by the TANF agency to determine whether the parent has a demonstrated inability to obtain needed child care. These criteria and definitions are defined in section 4.4

- 4.1.3 The following is a detailed description of how the State ensures parental choice by making sure that parents are informed about their ability to choose from among family and group home care, center-based care and in-home care including faith-based providers in each of these categories.

Eligible families are provided a variety of materials informing them of their ability to choose from among family and group home care, center-based care and in-home care including faith-based providers. Parents are informed about the wide range of quality child care available through the award-winning video, “Come, Play With Me” and printed materials. The consumer publication, A Parent’s Guide to Choosing Quality Child Care in South Carolina, continues to be distributed throughout the state by a variety of agencies and organizations. SCDSS maintains a toll-free number, 1-800-763-ABCD, which is publicized statewide; this allows parents and consumers to call for information. As part of a new management information system, the Lead Agency is developing a website that addresses consumer education needs. Additionally, a new ABC website for providers is under construction which will address consumer issues and link to the Lead Agency website.

The CCR&R agencies give parents detailed information about the full range of local child care programs available to families. Counselors offer parents personalized guidance about how to find the type of care best for their children, what to look for in the programs they visit, and the quality of programs in their area. They also provide printed materials about child care, hold parent education workshops, and maintain resource libraries.

Local SCDSS Support Service Specialists also provide information and counseling to parents regarding their choice of child care.

- 4.1.4 Does the State conduct activities aimed at families with limited English proficiency to promote access to child care subsidies and reduce barriers to receiving subsidies and accessing child care services?

☒ Yes. If yes, **describe** these activities, including how the State overcomes language barriers with families and providers.

☐ No.

The Lead Agency provides Hispanic and Bilingual Language Access training to caseworkers and supervisors. The training focuses on the use of the agency’s established procedures to properly interpret and translate when providing services to non-English speaking families. SCDSS contracts for a statewide HABLA line to provide interpreter and translation services as needed. In addition, the ABC application has been translated into Spanish. SCDSS will be exploring other ways in which to better meet the needs of non-English speaking clients.

#### **4.2 Records of Parental Complaints**

The following is a detailed description of how the State maintains a record of substantiated parental complaints and how it makes the information regarding such parental complaints available to the public on request. (658E(c)(2)(C), §98.32))

**The Lead Agency maintains a record of substantiated parental complaints and makes information regarding complaints available to the public upon request. Clients are encouraged to report concerns or complaints regarding providers suspected of violating minimum licensing standards or providing substandard care as defined by the ABC System Standards. Substantiated complaints are placed in the provider's permanent file. The toll-free number, 1-800-763-ABCD, is available to parents to voice complaints and concerns. Both the Lead Agency website and the new ABC website (abcqualitycare.org), which is under construction, will address parent complaints as well.**

**Complaints regarding regulatory concerns are referred to the child care regulatory division. Complaints regarding suspected child abuse are referred to the child protective services staff at SCDSS. Complaints relating to suspected child abuse by child care providers are referred to the Office for Out of Home Abuse and Neglect (OHAN) at SCDSS. Complaints relating to ABC Program Standards only are referred to ABC Program Monitoring. The Director of Child Care Services has implemented a series of staffings to review the records of providers who have major deficiencies and/or appear to have willful and consistent violations of licensing requirements or ABC standards. Regular case staffings between Licensing and ABC Monitoring staff will be institutionalized and held on a regular basis.**

**Information regarding substantiated regulatory complaints is available online on the Lead Agency's website. This information is accessible to parents and the general public. The current online information is being expanded to provide a more complete history of regulated facilities.**

#### **4.3 Unlimited Access to Children in Child Care Settings**

The following is a detailed description of the procedures in effect in the State for affording parents unlimited access to their children whenever their children are in the care of a provider who receives CCDF funds. (658E(c)(2)(B), §98.31))

**The Lead Agency has procedures in place to ensure that providers afford parents unlimited access to their children during normal hours of operation or whenever the children are in care. Clients are informed in the Parent Handbook and on the Client's Rights and Responsibilities Fact Sheet to select a provider who will allow unlimited access to their children. Additionally, providers are required by the Center-Based Standards for the ABC Child Care Program and by the Family/Group Child Care Homes Standards for the ABC Child Care Program to allow parents unlimited access to their children. As a condition of participation and payment, self-arranged care providers must agree to allow parents immediate access to children in their care.**

#### **4.4 Criteria or Definitions Applied by TANF Agency to Determine Inability to Obtain Child Care**

The regulations at §98.33(b) require the Lead Agency to inform parents who receive TANF benefits about the exception to the individual penalties associated with the work requirement for



any single custodial parent who has a demonstrated inability to obtain needed child care for a child under 6 years of age.

In fulfilling this requirement, the following criteria or definitions are applied by the TANF agency to determine whether the parent has a demonstrated inability to obtain needed child care:

NOTE: The TANF agency, not the Child Care Lead Agency, is responsible for establishing the following criteria or definitions. These criteria or definitions are offered in this Plan as a matter of public record. The TANF agency that established these criteria or definitions is: \_SCDSS\_.

- "appropriate child care": **Appropriate child care must be determined, by parental choice, to ensure that the developmental nurturing needs of a child(ren) are met. Child care facilities must comply with the SC Code of Laws addressing regulatory requirements and procedures. Informal arrangements are not subject to child care statutory and regulatory requirements; however, parents are required to complete a Self-Arranged Child Care Certification form ensuring that certain health and safety requirements are being met.**
- "reasonable distance": **Reasonable distance is defined by the Lead Agency as the fair and reasonable travel distance to a child care facility that will not interrupt Family Independence participation. Parents must be given parental choice to select the child care facility that best meets the needs of their child. The Support Services Specialists (SSS), in collaboration with the FI Case Manager, will determine "reasonable distance."**
- "unsuitability of informal child care": **Informal child care arrangements must meet the needs and parental choice rights of the FI participant. Informal child care arrangements must comply with policies and procedures developed by the ABC Child Care Program. Potential informal providers must pass a background check which includes a check of the Central Registry and Sex Offender Registry. Additionally, a Self-Arranged Child Care Certification Form, which addresses certain health and safety issues, must be completed by all informal providers and reviewed by the county DSS worker, and the FI participant completes the informal facility checklist which addresses the caregiver's ability to care for their child(ren).**
- "affordable child care arrangements": **Affordable child care arrangements are determined by a market rate survey conducted by the Lead Agency.**

## **PART 5**

### **ACTIVITIES & SERVICES TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY AND AVAILABILITY OF CHILD CARE**

#### **5.1 Quality Earmarks and Set-Asides**

5.1.1 The Child Care and Development Fund provides earmarks for infant and toddler care and school-age care and resource and referral services as well as the special earmark for quality activities. The following describes the activities; identifies the entities providing the activities; describes the expected results of the activities and, if the activities have been ongoing, the actual results of the activities. **For the infant and toddler earmark, the State must note in its description of the activities, what is the maximum age of a child who may be served with such earmarked funds (not to exceed 36 months).**

Infants and toddlers: **The Lead Agency supports infant/toddler services from an infrastructure development perspective, utilizing staff from colleges and universities, state agencies, Head Start, SC First Steps, and CCR&R statewide. The staff completed graduate course work coupled with WestEd Certification for Modules I, II, III, and IV of the Program for Infant/Toddler Care (PITC).**

**The second phase of development has offered an undergraduate/graduate course targeted to county and regional staff providing direct technical assistance to child care programs. Scholarships are available to staff of First Steps, CCR&R, Success By 6® and others to build local and regional infrastructure capability. Organizations are encouraged to work together in regions to ensure that a variety of skills and expertise are available to child care programs throughout the state. In 2007, the coursework will be offered to selected providers at Level A to continue to expand the PITC knowledge base.**

**The Children's Center at USC, formerly the USC Gateway Center of Excellence, provides guidance to those seeking new strategies for creating appropriate environments for infants/toddlers. This research and teaching center will continue to serve the early childhood community through its distance learning environment. The demonstration center and the distance learning capabilities continue to extend professional development opportunities statewide. Under the USC Foundation's sponsorship, additional fiscal analysis of the cost of quality care is being provided, which is especially useful as the Center receives no underlying subsidy.**

**An Infant/Toddler Credential, created through a higher education collaborative, has been implemented in two-year colleges throughout the state. This credential serves to bridge articulation between the two-year and four-year institutions. A three-hour graduate level course with field experiences has been provided to early childhood faculty within the technical college system. This course work has been designed to increase faculty expertise for teaching the Inclusive Care course, which is part of the Infant/Toddler Credential. A majority of the technical colleges participated in the national pilot initiative to achieve accreditation for early childhood departments at the two year level (four colleges have received accreditation and the others are in the accreditation process). This achievement has led to articulation between four-year and two-year institutions and expansion of the T.E.A.C.H. scholarship program to include the B.A. model.**

**A major initiative for child care providers serving infants and toddlers was completed during FFY 2004-2005. A new round of infant/toddler grants will be explored to further target quality**

improvements in ratios and provide a variety of options to the provider, such as the purchase of new materials, the provision of salary supplements, and financial incentives to serve younger children. The grant initiative will explore partnering with certified technical assistance providers in the new SC Early Care and Education Technical Assistance System to maximize resources, promote the state's focus on presenting clear and consistent messages to caregivers, and assure fiscal accountability. SCDSS will also refine the grant equipment lists and guides to encourage long-range planning and purchases by providers.

A new PITC Outreach initiative will be undertaken to take PITC concepts directly to caregivers in child care programs through training and technical assistance to be provided on-site over an extended course of study. An Infant/Toddler Summit was held in 2007 to kick off this new initiative to the PITC community statewide. A pilot technical assistance and development project will be implemented for an electronic system of data collection and assessment of infants and toddlers. This system will be designed to track children's progress over time and identify developmental delays or problems.

Resource and referral services: The Lead Agency contracts with a statewide CCR&R Network to expand resource and referral services to parents and providers. The CCR&R Network offers other resources in the community including training and forums for child care providers, information about child care costs and payment options, and parenting information on safety and child development.

School-age child care: The Lead Agency will continue its collaborative relationship with SDE to assure that before- and after-school care is provided to eligible children at school sites around the state. This program will continue to target underserved areas. SCDSS will collaborate with the SC After-school Alliance (SCAA) to expand and enhance quality after-school services. A new School-Age Credential has been developed in collaboration with the technical college system. A new course on School-Age Care (SAC 101) has been implemented by the technical colleges. This new availability will be reflected in the new ABC Level A Standards for staff qualifications. A School-Age Certificate will also be available to child care providers through on-site or distance learning through a partnership with Trident Technical College.

The Lead Agency has entered into a contractual agreement with the South Carolina Afterschool Alliance to modify and expand the system to include criteria regarding the provision of technical assistance in school-age programs. This same contract will provide for more technical assistance to be given to afterschool programs which might not otherwise be able to access such services. Staff from the Lead Agency is working with the Alliance and other school-age care partners on this initiative.

The Lead Agency has entered into a contractual agreement with Trident Technical College (TTC) to expand the provision of school-age care education through the technical college system. TTC has the lead responsibility to ensure that coursework and class materials/activities are uniform and made available to all technical colleges desiring to provide school-age care coursework.

- 5.1.2 The law requires that not less than 4% of the CCDF be set aside for quality activities. (658E(c)(3)(B), 658G, §§98.13(a), 98.16(h), 98.51) The Lead Agency estimates that the following amount and percentage will be used for the quality activities (not including earmarked funds) during the 1-year period: October 1, 2007 through September 30, 2008: **\$3,215,655 (4 %)**

5.1.3 **Check** each activity the Lead Agency will undertake to improve the availability and quality of child care (include activities funded through the 4% quality set-aside as well as the special earmark for quality activities). (658D(b)(1)(D), 658E(c)(3)(B), §§98.13(a), 98.16(h))

Activity	Check if undertaking/will undertake	Name and type of entity providing activity	Check if this entity is a non-governmental entity?
Comprehensive consumer education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Grants or loans to providers to assist in meeting State and local standards	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Monitoring compliance with licensing and regulatory requirements	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Professional development, including training, education, and technical assistance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Improving salaries and other compensation for child care providers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Activities in support of early language, literacy, pre-reading, and early math concepts development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Activities to promote inclusive child care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Healthy Child Care America and other health activities including those designed to promote the social and emotional development of children	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Activities that increase parental choice	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Other activities that improve the quality of child care (describe below).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Other activities that improve the availability of child care (describe below).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
(§98.51(a)(1) and (2))			

5.1.4 For each activity checked, **describe** the expected results of the activity. If you have conducted an evaluation of this activity, **describe the results**. If you have not conducted an evaluation, **describe** how you will evaluate the activities.

**1. The Lead Agency earmarks funds for consumer education. Expected results for comprehensive consumer education include a better educated consumer as well as consumer knowledge of where to go to ask questions and file complaints/comments. Parents are informed**

about quality child care through the award-winning video, “Come, Play With Me”, printed materials, and resource and referral activities. The Lead Agency maintains a toll-free number, 1-800-763-ABCD, which is publicized statewide; this allows parents and consumers to call for information or to make complaints. As part of a new management information system, the Lead Agency is launching a new website ([abcqualitycare.org](http://abcqualitycare.org)) that will address consumer education needs and will provide another forum for disseminating information and accepting complaints. Activities will be evaluated through a review of consumer usage of current consumer education activities – video, print materials, resource and referral activities, toll-free number and analysis will be conducted to determine effective strategies and adjustments needed.

The SC CCR&R Network give parents detailed information about the full range of local child care programs, current openings, guidelines for public subsidies, and other financial assistance. Counselors offer parents personalized guidance about how to find the type of care best for their children, what to look for in the programs they visit, and the quality of programs in their area. They also provide printed materials about child care, hold parent education workshops, and maintain resource libraries.

These consumer activities will allow parents to become more informed consumers when choosing quality child care. Coordination among all stakeholders will ensure that a consistent message is made available to parents throughout the state.

2. Historically, the Lead Agency sets aside funds for one-time, initial enrollment grants to child care providers voluntarily meeting higher standards. The majority of providers at Level B have used these grant funds to improve the learning environment for children. Grant opportunities for the new Level A are currently under exploration based on funding availability. Expected results of grants to providers to assist in meeting State standards are improved performance on the ABC review tools for Levels A and B and therefore better quality of care. Periodically, the Lead Agency is able to provide program improvement grants to child care providers who have been enrolled as Level B or Level A providers in the ABC Child Care Program. Such grants enable providers to purchase supplies and equipment or to replenish and expand existing materials for their children using ABC guidelines for developmentally appropriate materials. Those grants not only benefit children subsidized through the ABC Child Care Program but also improve the quality of care for all children enrolled in these programs. As a special initiative, the Lead Agency may provide grants to Level A or B providers to improve the quality of infant/toddler services. Tracking of such grant initiatives will be built into the new ABC management information system now under construction to measure grant outcomes related to program scores on the ABC Program Standards as funding allows. (See Part 5.1 for discussion of this initiative).
3. The Lead Agency allocates funds for improving child care regulatory services in SC. Funding for enforcement staff increases the state’s ability to adequately protect children and helps ensure compliance with licensing requirements. Major structural changes are underway to streamline and automate the licensing system and revise the policy manual. The Licensing system is being tested and will be fully functional by July 2007; a new policy manual was completed and staff were trained in January 2007. These initiatives will improve the efficiency and overall functioning of the regulatory system, eliminating gaps in services and reducing errors.

Licensing/Regulatory staff received two days of WestEd infant/toddler program training specifically designed for them and training on developmentally appropriate practice for 3 – 5 year olds. The staff will continue to receive training to ensure consistent messages regarding quality care with those involved in the training and technical assistance system.

4. Expected results of professional development which includes training, education, and technical assistance are:
  - a. to assure a comprehensive system to track provision of training, education, and technical assistance to caregivers and directors as required by state regulation and ABC program standards,
  - b. to provide for credentials, incentives, and scholarships to recognize student achievement
  - c. to assure the quality of training, education, and technical assistance through statewide standards for professional development service providers and services provided,
  - d. to identify gaps in service provision and needs for additional services,
  - e. to provide leadership for the workforce to the higher education community to promote articulation between two-year and four-year institutions
  - f. to provide demonstration sites that reflect Level A child care service quality,
  - g. to support those providing education, training and technical assistance to child care providers with professional development to improve the quality of their services
  - h. to identify a core knowledge base for the statewide early childhood community.”
  - i. to promote statewide consistency for standards and requirements relating to professional development across agencies.

To ensure affordable, accessible, high quality training, the Lead Agency has established a statewide training system for caregivers and directors. This program has been contracted to First Steps in order to offer the T.E.A.C.H.® scholarship program. The Lead Agency now collaborates through First Steps with the Center for Child Care Career Development (CCCCD), which administers a credentialing and professional development system with several key components and will:

- Maintain a statewide registry of training records for caregivers and directors (now online);
- Administer a training system and trainer approval process for certified training;
- Maintain a statewide trainer registry for continuing education credits meeting SCDSS regulatory requirements;
- Coordinate a statewide training calendar of certified training;
- Administer a credentialing process for the ABC 30-hour credential for family and group providers;
- Administer a credentialing process for the South Carolina Early Childhood Credential;
- Administer a credentialing process for the South Carolina Infant Toddler Credential;
- Administer a credentialing process for the School-Age Credential;
- Administer the T.E.A.C.H.® Early Childhood SC Program;
- Provide technical assistance to trainers to help improve the quality of training;
- Develop a technical assistance on-line database to be used by certified Technical Assistance Providers

- Administer a salary bonus program, “Smart Money,” for eligible students who complete the SC Early Childhood Credential and ABC 30-hour credential for family and group providers;
- Collaborate with community leaders and state and national professional organizations to promote training and professional development;
- Administer the new certification program for technical assistance providers.

The CCCCCD tracks the provision of services to measure a, b, c, and d as outlined above to measure the process. Additionally, the technical assistance component implemented during the past year has an outcome evaluation study underway through Clemson University.

The CCCCCD collaborates with the Lead Agency on a number of special initiatives at the state level to further improve child care quality in SC including:

- Early childhood institutes and regional train-the-trainer seminars for registered and certified instructors to improve adult teaching skills and increase professional knowledge of current trends in early care and education;
- Annual Early Childhood Leadership Institute to address current trends and issues that impact the early childhood professional development system in SC;
- Membership on the Good Start, Grow Smart Task Force;
- Facilitation of the new NAEYC program accreditation throughout the state’s technical college system through partnership with State Technical College Board, SCDSS, and Head Start Collaboration Office;
- Leadership in the creation and revision of the basic core knowledge for early care and education professionals in SC;
- Partnership for the Early Childhood Summit initiative. The Lead Agency, Head Start Collaboration Office, CCCCCD, and the SC Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators are partners in this initiative allowing 4-year and 2-year higher education institutions to discuss child care workforce career development and articulation issues between the associate and bachelor degree levels.

These initiatives are tied to expected results e., g. h., and i. shown above. Progress of CCCCCD toward these results is documented through participant evaluations and documentation of completion of activities through regular progress reports submitted to the Lead Agency.

The Lead Agency earmarks funds to improve the infrastructure for early care and education in SC. SCDSS works with the Head Start Collaboration Office and higher education institutions throughout the state to address articulation issues. The Early Childhood Summits referenced above included representatives from the state technical colleges, senior institutions offering degrees in early childhood education, state agencies (including the Lead Agency, SDE, SC Commission on Higher Education, State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education, state professional organizations, and other workforce representatives. One of the goals of the series of Summits has been achieved – a statewide Infant/Toddler Credential. Under the leadership of the Lead Agency, which received funding from the Zero to Three Program at the federal level, five new infant/toddler courses were developed by faculty from both two-year and four-year institutions. Those courses together comprise a new Infant/Toddler Credential now available statewide which addresses the results under b. above.

The other Summit goal of statewide articulation has been more difficult to achieve but the accreditation pilot for two-year institutions through NAEYC has resulted in four colleges receiving accreditation and ten additional colleges in process to achieve accreditation within the next year. This accreditation of the two- year institutions is removing one of the major barriers to articulation. Articulation is already in place with SC State University and well in progress with the University of South Carolina. SC State University is planning distance learning opportunities throughout the state and is developing articulation agreements with participating technical colleges. USC has re-instituted its bachelor's degree program in early childhood education and is working closely with the local technical college on courses to articulate. The distance learning opportunities at the USC Child Development Research Center will extend course opportunities to local residents as well as those living in other areas of the state. Other colleges are indicating that they will consider articulation. The articulation agreements coupled with the T.E.A.C.H. scholarship opportunities and the new ABC Level A Standards should increase the opportunities for higher educational levels for caregivers and directors. Articulation is necessary to allow a seamless system of provider education opportunities. During 2007-2008, the Lead Agency will continue to partner with key agencies toward greater articulation among institutions statewide. The T.E.A.C.H. scholarship program tracks all scholarship participants to evaluate participation in the program related to results expected under e. above. Child outcome measures related to provider educational level have not been addressed to date. A child tracking system must be implemented to evaluate such outcome measures as funding allows.

To provide clear examples of Level A quality and as a pilot site for new child care initiatives, the Children's Center at USC, formerly USC Gateway Academy, serves as a statewide demonstration site of viable quality child care, drawing upon the strengths of private and public sectors. The facility was constructed and equipped with a state-of-the-art outdoor play area and indoor learning environment on the first level. The second floor houses a research and training center to provide training, observation, and coursework through on-site and distance learning. This initiative is a cornerstone toward the expected results under f. above. This program will be used as a pilot site to track and evaluate the use of an electronic data collection system to be developed to assess infants and toddlers during 2007-2009.

For school-age care, Trident Technical College has developed and is piloting an introductory three-hour course as well as a School-Age Certificate for school-age staff. Some coursework will be delivered through a digital satellite system and streaming video technology. Trident Technical College will provide the train-the trainer component for other technical colleges and be able to offer the course statewide either through those colleges or directly through distance learning. Progress reports are required for their contract with the Lead Agency to evaluate their progress. This initiative addresses expected results outlined in b. above.

To address the expected results outlined in g. above to provide professional development for those who educate, train, and provide technical assistance to caregivers and directors, the Lead Agency continues with its annual offerings of three-hour undergraduate/graduate courses offered to increase the formal education and expertise of staff already providing technical assistance to child care programs. Two courses address infant/toddler care and WestEd Certification in PITC Modules I-IV. Another course that addresses care for 3-5 year olds is offered periodically to ensure consistency with the requirements established by the educational system. The USC Research Center will continue to serve as the link between SDE and this course offering. As stated



in 5.1.3., related specialized training for child care licensing workers will continue to be provided to assure common understanding among agencies for state-adopted programs. Additionally, early childhood faculty members have received a three-hour graduate level course, which enables them to teach an Inclusive Care course, a component of the Infant/Toddler Credential. The most recent initiative to improve the professional development of those who serve early care and education programs has been the implementation of the M.Ed. cohort. An inter-agency group of 25 members selected from statewide applications has been formed to work toward their M.Ed. in early childhood education together to increase early childhood expertise statewide. The goal is to build a statewide cadre of faculty and related agency staff with the needed expertise related to early childhood. Such offerings also build a foundation toward a core knowledge base outlined in expected results h. above. Currently, evaluation is measured by course participation and tracking of offerings by students after completion of coursework.

Expected results for Core Knowledge in h. above will be addressed more specifically during the 2007-2008 years with the progress toward a revised formal Core Knowledge framework for higher education. The state already has established Core Knowledge documents through the CCCCD framework document; coursework including ECD 101, SAC 101, PITC graduate coursework, the graduate Inclusive Care course; and other key initiatives such as the ELS of the Good Start Grow Smart Task Force and the development of a multi-media approach to training providers on the Good Start Grow Smart ELS. The formal Core Knowledge document will be professionally reviewed and brought to the higher education community for their review and adoption as a learning community at the next Early Childhood Summit. Progress toward this goal will be tracked and documented.

Finally, SCDSS with early care and education partners implemented a statewide technical assistance system to address the need to set competency levels for people providing technical assistance in the state. There are uneven resources in various geographical areas in the state and a continued difficulty in attracting qualified professionals to some areas. A statewide assessment of resources several years ago identified a strong need to create a system to set parameters and outline a process to integrate on-site technical assistance into daily practice in early care and education settings. The System outlines a process for core knowledge/competencies, uniformity of technical assistance, coordination/integration with state child care licensing requirements and the ABC Level B and A standards, and accountability. Seven regions have been identified in the state. Currently, a pilot is underway with two regions working more closely to collect more information about the provision of technical assistance and support needed to strengthen the quality of delivery. The lead agency entered into a contractual agreement with Clemson University to provide consultation, develop a plan and conduct an assessment of the South Carolina Early Care and Education Technical Assistance System. The plan focuses on the goals and process and outcome factors as identified in the technical assistance system document and as noted above. A statewide telephone survey is planned to collect information about how the system is being implemented, maintained, and recommended modifications. Consultation in the development of the evaluation has been provided by a NCCIC representative.

5. The T.E.A.C.H.® Early Childhood Program provides scholarships for child care teachers to complete course work in early childhood education, increasing their knowledge and compensation level. The project should also decrease turnover rates among providers. Participants completing the SC Early Childhood Credential receive a \$200 salary bonus. The Lead Agency provides

funding for T.E.A.C.H.®. The CCCCCD tracks all participants in the T.E.A.C.H. scholarship program and provides regular progress reports to the Lead Agency.

6. SCDSS and SDE are providing leadership in the process of developing the State's early learning guidelines which align with the State's K-12 education standards. The stakeholders include First Steps, Head Start, the Catawba Indian Nation, Voices for SC's Children, DHEC (the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems/ECCS Project Director) and private providers. The Lead Agency is partnering with SDE and key higher education institutions on grant and funding opportunities to further support early language, literacy, pre-reading, and math concepts for children. The Good Start Grow Smart Task Force will track the training sessions and the dispersal of the ELS materials when completed. Evaluation sheets will be collected from participants for future planning on use of the materials. ABC Level A Standards mandate training on the ELS for the annual training requirements. Compliance to the standards will be documented when individual reviews are completed.
7. The Lead Agency contracts with USC to provide consultation and guidance to child care facilities regarding special needs children. See Section 5.1 for discussion of new Inclusive Care course work.

Currently the Lead Agency has a contractual agreement (for more than 3 years) with the University of South Carolina's School of Medicine – Center for Disability Resources for the provision of training and technical assistance to child care providers currently serving or interested in serving children with different needs. Center staff has developed a Monograph Series that includes an in-depth review of developmental deficiencies and guidance for working with young children. The ABC Special Needs Program helps parents locate quality special needs care and has recently expanded the services it provides.

8. SC has received a Healthy Child Care America grant, through SCDHEC. The Lead Agency is a part of the partners developing the ECCS comprehensive plan. SCDSS works with health care leaders to incorporate health and safety information into training initiatives and child care regulatory requirements (e.g. Back to Sleep, medicine policies, information about confining equipment). This ensures that parents and child care providers receive relevant and accurate health and safety information. Health incentives will be included in Infant/Toddler Quality Initiatives.
9. Under the ABC Child Care Program, child care standards have been developed for two levels that are above the State's regulatory requirements. Participation is voluntary, and the ABC Child Care Program provides higher rates to these providers. Program Monitoring staff perform regular unannounced monitoring visits and provide technical assistance. Child care facilities are encouraged to volunteer to meet higher standards. First Steps has increased the visibility of the ABC Child Care Program, as the agency is legislatively mandated to ensure that child care centers receiving state funding be licensed and pursuing standards that are equivalent to ABC Level B (formerly ABC Enhanced). The Lead Agency supports First Steps by reviewing child care programs to determine if they meet Level B quality requirements.

The ABC Standards are the foundation for improving awareness of and compliance with higher quality child care in SC. Only legally operating child care programs may participate. To promote licensing standards, all programs are encouraged to become licensed even if legally exempt.

The newly instituted Level A Standards represent the highest quality of care recognized by the State. These Standards include:

**Part I**

**Regulatory Requirements, Supervision of Children, Staff Qualifications and Development, Health and Safety, Nutrition and Food Service, Staff-Parent Interaction/Involvement, and Administration.**

**Part II**

**Classroom Measurement Tools: Environment Rating Scales (ERS) which are externally developed, valid and reliable. Program Monitoring staff have all been trained to reliability on the ERS and use tablet pc's to conduct the assessments. Classroom reviews with ERS average 3-3.5 hours per classroom observed and the review can take multiple days to complete depending on the number of classrooms in the program.**

**The lower level ABC Level B Standards address the following areas:**

**Regulatory Requirements, Staff Qualifications and Development, Health and Safety, Nutrition and Food Service, Staff-Parent Interaction, Staff-Child Ratios, Staff-Child Interactions, Activities, and Physical Environment**

**The Level B Standards were created internally 15 years ago to move child care providers in the direction of higher quality and to create an awareness of quality issues statewide. Over 1200 providers currently participate at Level B or higher. All providers meeting Level B standards are required to meet Regulatory Requirements, Staff Qualifications and Development, Health and Safety, Nutrition and Food Service, and Staff-Parent Interaction and to reach a defined compliance level overall on the remaining standards of Staff-Child Ratios, Staff-Child Interactions, Activities, and Physical Environment for each age group to be enrolled. The Lead Agency reviewer observes each room or group for a minimum of 30 minutes and rates the outdoor playground area. The review tool is structured to allow for:**

- Accommodation of program weaknesses in one area by compensation of strengths in another area;**
- Multi-level evaluation of individual staff, classrooms and overall center compliance to standards.**

**The Level B standards are currently being adapted to the tablet pc's to insure an electronic system of monitoring. Full implementation of the electronic system of monitoring will include the monitoring process which will allow tracking of reviews through the system and aggregation of data for better evaluation of the process and the review results. The Lead Agency is conducting a joint desk review (licensing, ABC program monitoring, and the ABC Control Center) to evaluate the current status of all providers in the system and a review of current termination procedures to strengthen the quality assessments. The Lead Agency will review the current Level B standards to determine if revisions are needed to recalibrate the standards based on the new Level A. The agency is also striving to make these issues more easily understood by the public, including families in need of child care. The new ABC website will provide a new strategy toward public awareness. The Lead Agency will also explore additional ways (including electronic methods) to embed inter-rater reliability into the review process at all levels.**

The ABC Child Care Program benefits providers, parents, and children. Both Level A and Level B standards provide a measurable definition of quality that can be used by providers for in-house improvement. For parents and children, the external monitoring visits provide regular, unannounced reviews of their child care provider and a guide for quality care. The Lead Agency may provide technical assistance to programs having difficulty meeting the required minimum compliance and may refer programs to local certified technical assistance providers in the state's Technical Assistance System. Limited one-time grant funding may be available to assist providers in correcting deficiencies cited at initial enrollment.

The Lead Agency funds child care licensing staff with CCDF funds for additional unannounced visits for compliance to basic health and safety regulations. SCDSS may implement other incentives during this plan period to encourage or reward providers for quality improvement activities.

The SC Quality Early Care and Education Task Force made recommendations for a long-range plan to achieve quality care through improvements in ratios, professional development, governance, regulation, accreditation, management information systems, resource and referral, family child care networks, and financing. The Lead Agency continues to implement those recommendations as funding allows.

## **5.2 Good Start, Grow Smart Planning and Development**

This section of the Plan relates to the President's *Good Start, Grow Smart* initiative which is envisioned as a Federal-State partnership that creates linkages between CCDF, including funds set-aside for quality, and State public and private efforts to promote early learning. In this section, each Lead Agency is asked to assess its State's progress toward developing voluntary guidelines on language, literacy, pre-reading, and early math concepts and a plan for the education and training of child care providers. The third component of the President's *Good Start, Grow Smart* initiative, planning for coordination across at least four early childhood programs and funding streams, was addressed in Section 2.1.2.

**5.2.1 Status of Voluntary Early Learning Guidelines.** Indicate which of the following best describes the current status of the State's efforts to develop, implement, or revise research-based early learning guidelines (content standards) for three to five year-olds.

**NOTE: Check only one box to best describe the status of your State's three-to-five-year-old guidelines.**

- ☐ **Planning.** The State is planning for the development of early learning guidelines. Expected date of plan completion: \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ **Developing.** The State is in the process of developing early learning guidelines. Expected date of completion: \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ **Developed.** The State has approved the early learning guidelines, but has not yet developed or initiated an implementation plan. The early learning guidelines are included as **Attachment 5.2.1**.
- ☒ **Implementing.** In addition to having developed early learning guidelines, the State has embarked on implementation efforts which may include dissemination, training or embedding guidelines in the professional development system. The guidelines are included as **Attachment 5.2.1**.

- ☐ **Revising.** The State has previously developed early learning guidelines and is now revising those guidelines. The guidelines are included as **Attachment 5.2.1.**
- ☐ **Other (describe):**

**Describe** the progress made by the State in developing, implementing, or revising early learning guidelines since the date of submission of the 2006-2007 State Plan.

**SDE has guidelines for 4- and 5- year olds aligned with grades K-12. The Good Start, Grow Smart Task Force has expanded on those guidelines already in place and have developed guidelines for 3-year-olds. Concentration has been placed on approaches to learning as well as the domains of pre-reading, literacy, language arts, numeracy, physical, and social/emotional. As discussed in section 2.1.2. delays in the implementation of the guidelines have been due to the cyclical review of the K-12 Standards in math and language arts. The multi-media approach to training on the standards also has made implementation more complex due to filming and editing delays. Requirements for training on the ELS have been embedded into the new ABC Level A standards and public school implementation of ELS is slated for fall of 2007. The draft ELS have been posted on the SDE website and have been introduced at various statewide professional conferences. Print materials are currently being developed.**

If developed, are the guidelines aligned with K-12 content standards or other standards (e.g., Head Start Child Outcomes, State Performance Standards)?

☒ Yes. If yes, **name standards.**

☐ No.

**The ELS are aligned with the SDE guidelines for children ages 4 and 5 which in turn are aligned with current K-12 content standards (unknown impact for those under current cyclical review which may result in revisions). The Head Start Performance Standards were adopted as the foundation for the social-emotional ELS. The guidelines will align with the new ABC Level A Standards. Following implementation of the 3-5 Standards, the Lead Agency will develop 0-3 ELS.**

If developed, are the guidelines aligned with early childhood curricula?

☒ Yes. If yes, **describe.**

☐ No.

**The guidelines will align with the SDE recommended curricula – Creative Curriculum, High Scope, and Montessori**

Have guidelines been developed for children in the following age groups (check if guidelines have been developed):

- ☐ Birth to three. Guidelines are included as Attachment 5.2.1
- ☐ Birth to five. Guidelines are included as Attachment 5.2.1
- ☐ Five years or older. Guidelines are included as Attachment 5.2.1

Efforts to develop early learning guidelines for children that may differ from those addressed in *Good Start, Grow Smart* (i.e., children birth to three or older than five) may be described here.

If any of your guidelines are available on the web, provide the appropriate Web site address (guidelines must still be attached to Plan): **Guidelines not available at this time**  
**Web version is available at the following website:**

<http://ed.sc.gov/agency/offices/ece/goodstartgrowsmart.html>

- 5.2.2 **Domains of Voluntary Early Learning Guidelines.** Do the guidelines for children three-to-five-years-old address language, literacy, pre-reading, and early math concepts?

☒ Yes.

☐ No.

Do the guidelines for children three-to-five-years-old address domains not specifically included in *Good Start, Grow Smart*, such as social/emotional, cognitive, physical, health, creative arts, or other domains?

☒ Yes. If yes, **describe**.

☐ No.

**The Good Start, Grow Smart Task Force included in our guidelines Approaches to Learning which includes cognitive, social/emotional and physical domains.**

- 5.2.3 **Implementation of Voluntary Early Learning Guidelines.** **Indicate** the strategies the State used or expects to use in **implementing** its early learning guidelines.

**Check all that apply:**

☒ Disseminating materials to practitioners and families

☒ Developing training curricula

☒ Partnering with other training entities to deliver training

☒ Aligning early learning guidelines with licensing, core competencies, and/or quality rating systems

☐ Other. Describe:

<b>Indicate</b> the stakeholders that are (or expect to be) actively supporting the implementation of early learning guidelines.	<b>Indicate</b> the programs that mandate or require the use of early learning guidelines.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Publicly funded (or subsidized) child care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Publicly funded (or subsidized) child care
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Head Start	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Head Start
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education/Public pre-k	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education/Public pre-k
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Early Intervention	<input type="checkbox"/> Early Intervention
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Child Care Resource and Referral	<input type="checkbox"/> Child Care Resource and Referral
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Higher Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Higher Education
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Parent Associations	<input type="checkbox"/> Parent Associations

☐ Other. Describe:

☐ Other. Describe:

How are (or will) cultural, linguistic and individual variations (be) acknowledged in implementation? **This is currently being reviewed at the program level. Program materials are being written in English/Spanish.**

How are (or will) the diversity of child care settings (be) acknowledged in implementation? **The diversity of child care settings are being acknowledged by embedding the early learning standards in training plans, statewide conferences and in the continuing development of a 9-part video series.**

Materials developed to support implementation of the guidelines are included as **Attachment 5.2.3**. If these are available on the web, provide the appropriate Web site address: <http://ed.sc.gov/agency/offices/ece/goodstartgrowsmart.html>

**5.2.4 Assessment of Voluntary Early Learning Guidelines.** As applicable, **describe** the State's plan for:

- (a) Validating the content of the early learning guidelines- **The assessment system that is being used is WORK SAMPLING. It is consistent with the early learning guidelines.**
- (b) Assessing the effectiveness and/or implementation of the guidelines- **We are in the beginning stages of the implementation and therefore are unable to address this at this time; however, we will build this in to the process.**
- (c) Assessing the progress of children using measures aligned with the guidelines- **We are in the beginning stages of the implementation and therefore are unable to address this at this time; however, we will build this in to the process.**
- (d) Aligning the guidelines with accountability initiatives- **We are in the beginning stages of the implementation and therefore are unable to address this at this time; however, we will build this in to the process.**

Written reports of these efforts are included as **Attachment 5.2.4**. If these are available on the web, provide the appropriate Web site address (reports must still be attached to Plan): <http://ed.sc.gov/agency/offices/ece/goodstartgrowsmart.html>  
**No written reports available at this time.**

**5.2.5 State Plans for Professional Development.** **Indicate** which of the following best describes the current status of the State's efforts to develop a professional development plan for early childhood providers that includes all the primary sectors: child care, Head Start, and public education. **NOTE: Check ONLY ONE box to best describe the status of your State's professional development plan.**

- ☐ **Planning.** **Indicate** whether steps are under way to develop a plan. If so, describe the entities involved in the planning process, time frames for completion and/or implementation, the steps anticipated, and how the plan is expected to support early language, literacy, pre-reading and early math concepts.
- ☐ **Developing.** A plan is being drafted. The draft or planning documents are included as **Attachment 5.2.5**.

- ☐ **Developed.** A plan has been written but has not yet been implemented. The plan is included as **Attachment 5.2.5.**
- ☐ **Implementing.** A plan has been written and is now in the process of being implemented, or has been implemented. The plan is included as **Attachment 5.2.5.**
- ☒ **Revising.** The State previously developed a professional development plan and is now revising that plan, or has revised it since submitting the 06-07 State Plan. The revisions or the revised plan are included as **Attachment 5.2.5.**  
**\*\*NOTE: The state has addressed the key elements of the professional development system, but they have not yet been consolidated into a single document or a formalized plan. The Lead Agency will forward the plan when it is drafted.**
- ☐ **Other (describe):**

**Describe** the progress made by the State in planning, developing, implementing, or revising the professional development plan since the date of submission of the 2006-2007 State Plan.

**The original plan for professional development was developed in the 1990's with the creation of the Center for Child Care Career Development. The plan initiatives are undergoing updates and revisions based on developments within the state as well as new mandates from CCDF.**

**The Lead Agency entered into a contractual agreement with Clemson University to provide consultation, develop a plan and conduct an assessment of the South Carolina Early Care and Education Technical Assistance System. The plan focuses on the goals and process and outcome factors as identified in the technical assistance system document. A statewide telephone survey is planned to collect information about how the system is being implemented, maintained, and recommended modifications.**

**Additionally, a pilot is in process (for 9 months) to work closely with technical assistance providers in two regions to gain information about technical assistance providers training and resource needs, coordination for the provision of technical assistance with Lead Agency oversight and regulatory staff, recommendations that impact child care quality standards, and direction regarding the provision of technical assistance.**

If your State has developed a plan for professional development, does the plan include (Check EITHER yes or no for each item):

	Yes	No
Specific goals or desired outcomes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A link to Early Learning Guidelines	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Continuum of training and education to form a career path	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Articulation from one type of training to the next	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Quality assurance through approval of trainers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quality assurance through approval of training content	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A system to track practitioners' training	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assessment or evaluation of training effectiveness	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
State Credentials – State for which roles (e.g. infant and toddler credential, directors' credential, etc.)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specialized strategies to reach family, friend and neighbor caregivers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

For each **Yes** response, **reference** the page(s) in the plan and briefly **describe**.

For each **No** response, **indicate** any plans the Lead Agency has to incorporate these components.

### Specific Goals or Desired Outcomes

Goals relating to Early Learning Guidelines, articulation, and State Credentials are being revised to accommodate recent changes.

### A Link to Early Learning Guidelines

When the Early Learning Guidelines are complete and approved, training sessions will be made available for continuing education credits to all early childhood professionals in the state.

### Continuum of Education to Form A Career Path

See the attached career lattice developed for early childhood providers throughout the state, which includes all of the primary sectors: child care, Head Start and public education.

### Articulation From One Type of Training to The Next

The state has been working on articulation issues since 1999. In partnership with the Head Start Collaboration Office, the ABC Child Care Program approached the SC Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators (SCAECTE) to host a series of Early Childhood Education Summits for higher education institutions offering early childhood education course work in SC to discuss the needs of the early childhood workforce and address articulation issues.

The Summit led to a series of state-level meetings and work groups with representatives from technical colleges, senior institutions offering degrees in early childhood education, state agencies, state professional organizations, and other workforce representatives. In 2004, NAEYC recruited SC to participate in a pilot to create a national system for accrediting associate degree early childhood education programs. SC technical colleges are among the first in the nation to receive this accreditation and have had the opportunity to be part of the design of the national system. This brings the state closer to articulation from the technical college system to four-year institutions. See section 5.1.1 and 5.1.4 for further discussion on articulation. Another Summit will be held during the next plan period to address progress on articulation as well as core knowledge.

### Quality Assurance Through Approval of Trainers

The CCCCC administers a voluntary certified trainer approval process with defined criteria. The state also registers all training for the state mandated child care licensing system. The new ABC Level A standards require use of certified trainers for a portion of required training hours.

### **Quality Assurance Through Approval of Training Content**

In conjunction with the voluntary trainer approval process, the CCCCD also certifies training content and related instructional strategies for trainers who are certified.

### **A System to Track Practitioners' Training**

The CCCCD administers the SC Child Care Training System. One of the components is a personnel registry for all training attended by directors and child care teachers. The personnel registry has recently become a web-based system to improve efficiency and to be more user-friendly.

### **Assessment or Evaluation of Training Effectiveness**

An assessment is provided at the end of every training session for comments on the effectiveness of the trainer and the instructional materials. These comments are compiled and used to guide future service delivery.

### **State Credentials**

The SC Early Childhood Credential is awarded after successful completion of an introductory course titled ECD 101. This course is offered through the early childhood departments at technical colleges statewide.

The ABC 30-hour Child Care Credential is targeted to family and group home child care providers. In addition, a specialized Infant/Toddler Credential based on college course work is offered through the technical college system. A specialized School-Age Credential has been implemented. A new Director's Credential will be implemented in the next plan period.

### **Specialized Strategies to Reach Family, Friend and Neighbor Caregivers**

The ABC 30-hour Child Care Credential is targeted to family and group home child care providers. This course has been marketed and offered throughout the state and will continue to be made available.

Are the professional development opportunities described in the plan available:

**Note: Check either yes or no for each item):**

	Yes	No
Statewide	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To Center-based Child Care Providers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To Group Home Providers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To Family Home Providers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To In-Home Providers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (describe):	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Describe** how the plan addresses early language, literacy, pre-reading, and early math concepts development.

**Early language, literacy, pre-reading, and numeracy development are addressed through formal course work in technical colleges and the Office of Early Childhood**

**Education (OECE) approval system. Training in these areas may also be provided through the trainer registry system or the certified training approval system. The Lead Agency will review the linkages between the implementation plan and the State's current early learning guidelines.**

Are program or provider-level incentives offered to encourage provider training and education?

- ☒ Yes. If yes, **describe**, including any connections between the incentives and training relating to early language, literacy, pre-reading and early math concepts.
- ☐ No. If no, **describe** any plans to offer incentives to encourage provider training and education, including any connections between the incentives and training relating to early language, literacy, pre-reading and early math concepts?

**A bonus of \$100 is available to family child care providers who complete the 30-hour ABC Child Care Credential. A bonus of \$200 is available to providers who complete the SC Early Childhood Credential. The SC T.E.A.C.H.® scholarship program for center-based teachers and directors provides 90% of the cost of tuition and books through a partnership between the State and the employer. The participant also receives \$50 for travel each semester.**

**Beyond the SC Early Childhood Credential level, scholarship recipients may receive 3-6 hours of paid release time per week and a 2% raise or \$300 bonus at the end of a contract year if they successfully complete 9-15 semester hours of course work. Family and group child care providers are eligible for 80% of the cost of tuition and books and \$50 travel per semester for pursuing the SC Early Childhood Credential. Family and group scholarship recipients are reimbursed for 75% of the release time given and receive a \$300 bonus after completing 9-15 semester hours of course work.**

**All current statewide incentives, except the 30-hour ABC Child Care Credential, are tied to formal course work in college. The new PITC Outreach initiative will provide incentives for caregivers and directors either by individual stipends or program grants. Initially, this training and technical assistance will not be tied to formal education. There are no specific links between incentives and training relating to early language, literacy, pre-reading, or numeracy.**

**First Steps County Partnerships have provided additional incentives such as classroom grants and awards to providers seeking training.**

As applicable, does the State assess the effectiveness of its professional development plan, including the achievement of any specified goals or desired outcomes?

- ☒ Yes. If yes, **describe** how the professional development plan's effectiveness/goal is assessed.
- ☐ No. If no, **describe** any plans to include assessments of the professional development plan's effectiveness/goal achievement.

Expected outcomes for the T.E.A.C.H.® scholarship program are to reduce turnover and increase educational level of the child care workforce. The purpose of the registry system is to have the capability to track and aggregate training information collected about participants. Prior to implementation of the computerized registry system, the Lead Agency had no data available to assess the ongoing education and training needs. The system also allows for tracking characteristics of the population to be served and projecting numbers for training.

Currently the State assesses the effectiveness of the implementation plan by measuring the:

- Number of students receiving the SC Early Childhood Credential;
- Number of students receiving the ABC 30-Hour Child Care Credential;
- Registration for Train-the-Trainer Seminars;
- Total number of certified trainers;
- Total number of registered trainers;
- Number of participants attending training by certified trainers;
- Number of participants attending training by registered trainers;
- Number of clock hours offered by certified trainers;
- Number of clock hours offered by registered trainers;
- Number of students receiving T.E.A.C.H.® Credential Scholarships;
- Number of students receiving T.E.A.C.H.® Associate Degree Scholarships; and
- Number of students completing the Credential and moving to Associate Degree Scholarships.

These measures are reported to the Lead Agency on a quarterly basis. Both the statewide registry system and the T.E.A.C.H.® scholarship program have been implemented within the past two years. Current assessment objectives relate to the areas of growth and tracking progress statewide, by college or geographic area. As the systems mature, data will be used to determine unmet needs for continuing education geographically as well as statewide. The information will aid in developing strategies to meet areas of need and to adjust the professional development plan accordingly.

Does the State assess the effectiveness of specific professional development initiatives or components?

☒ Yes. If yes, **describe** how specific professional development initiatives or components' effectiveness is assessed.

☐ No. If no, **describe** any plans to include assessments of specific professional development initiatives or components' effectiveness.

The Lead Agency has contracted with Clemson University to develop and implement an evaluation of the SC Technical Assistance System, both process and outcomes reflecting the goals of the System. Consultation in development of the evaluation has been provided by a representative of NCCIC.

As applicable, does (or will) the State use assessment to help shape or revise its professional development plan?

☒ Yes. If yes, **describe** how assessment informs the professional development plan.

☐ No. If no, **describe** any plans to include assessment to inform the professional development plan.

**Assessment will be used to more accurately determine provider professional development needs and relate those needs to specific geographical areas as well as assess the effectiveness of technical assistance to programs.**

**PART 6**  
**HEALTH AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS FOR PROVIDERS**

*(Only the 50 States and the District of Columbia complete Part 6.)*

The National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care (NRCHSCC) of DHHS's Maternal and Child Health Bureau supports a comprehensive, current, on-line listing of the licensing and regulatory requirements for child care in the 50 States and the District of Columbia. In lieu of requiring a State Lead Agency to provide information that is already publicly available, ACF accepts this compilation as accurately reflecting the States' licensing requirements. The listing, which is maintained by the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center School of Nursing, is available on the World Wide Web at: <http://nrc.uchsc.edu/>.

**6.1 Health and Safety Requirements for Center-Based Providers** (658E(c)(2)(F), §§98.41, §98.16(j))

6.1.1 Are all center-based providers paid with CCDF funds subject to licensing under State law that is indicated in the NRCHSCC's compilation?

☒ Yes. Answer 6.1.2, skip 6.1.3, and go to 6.2.

☐ No. If no, **describe** which center-based providers are exempt from licensing under State law and answer 6.1.2 and 6.1.3.

**All center-based providers paid with CCDF funds are subject to licensing requirements. As information, SC licensing regulations do not apply to the following:**

- Educational facilities, public or private, operating solely for educational purposes in grades one or above;
- Five year old Kindergarten;
- Kindergartens, nursery schools or other daytime programs, operating no more than four hours per day and receiving children younger than lawful school age;
- Facilities operating for more than four hours a day in connection with a shopping center or service or other similar facility, where the same children are cared for less than four hours a day and not on a regular basis (these facilities do meet local fire and sanitation requirements);
- School vacation or school holiday day camps for children;
- Summer resident camps for children;
- Bible schools normally conducted during vacation periods;
- Facilities for the mentally retarded (there are some specific references to statute);
- Facilities for the mentally ill (same as above).

**In addition, child care centers owned and operated by a local church congregation or an established religious denomination or a religious college or university which does not receive state or local financial assistance for child care services are required to meet the regulations applying to religious groups or bodies (registration).**

6.1.2 Have center licensing requirements as they relate to staff-child ratios, group size, or staff training been modified since approval of the last State Plan? (§98.41(a)(2)&(3))

☒ Yes. If yes, **describe** the changes.

☐ No.

Additional training on Blood Borne Pathogens and training for staff caring for special needs children has been added to the requirements since submission of the 2005-2007 CCDF Plan.

Incremental changes to the staff: child ratios begin taking affect in June 2007. \*See chart

### **Staffing Ratios**

<b>Age of child</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>6/24/2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>
Birth to 1 year	1:6	1:5	1:5	1:5
1 to 2 years	1:6	1:6	1:6	1:6
2 to 3 years	1:10	1:9	1:8	1:7
3 to 4 years	1:13	1:13	1:12	1:11
4 to 5 years	1:18	1:18	1:17	1:16
5 to 6 years	1:21	1:21	1:20	1:19
6 to 12 years	1:23	1:23	1:23	1:23

### **Nap Time Staffing Ratios**

<b>Age of child</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>
Birth to 1 year	1:8	1:5	1:5	1:5
1 to 2 years	1:8	1:6	1:6	1:6
2 to 3 years	1:12	1:18	1:16	1:14
3 to 4 years	1:15	1:26	1:24	1:22
4 to 5 years	1:20			
5 and older	1:25			
4 and older		1:36	1:34	1:32

(1) The staff: child ratio indicates the maximum number of children permitted per caregiver

(2) When there are mixed age groups in the same room, the staff: child ratio shall be consistent with the age of the majority of the children when no infants or toddlers are in

**the mixed age group. When infants or toddlers are in the mixed age group, the staff: child ratio for infants and toddlers shall be maintained.**

**(3) For mixed age groups, with one or more infants or toddlers, the ratios applicable to the youngest child in the group apply.**

6.1.3 For center-based care that is NOT licensed, and therefore not reflected in NRCHSCC's compilation, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

- The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)
- Building and physical premises safety
- Health and safety training

**6.2 Health and Safety Requirements for Group Home Providers**(658E(c)(2)(F), §§98.41, 98.16(j))

6.2.1 Are all group home providers paid with CCDF funds subject to licensing under State law that is indicated in the NRCHSCC's compilation? If:

☒ Yes. Answer 6.2.2, skip 6.2.3, and go to 6.3.

☐ No. If no, **describe** which group home providers are exempt from licensing under State law and answer 6.2.2 and 6.2.3.

6.2.2 Have group home licensing requirements that relate to staff-child ratios, group size, or staff training been modified since the approval of the last State Plan? (§98.41(a)(2)& (3))

☒ Yes. If yes, **describe** the changes.

☐ No.

**Additional training on Blood Borne Pathogens and training for staff caring for special needs children has been added to the requirements since submission of the 2005-2007 CCDF Plan.**

6.2.3 For group home care that is NOT licensed, and therefore not reflected in NRCHSCC's compilation, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

- The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)
- Building and physical premises safety
- Health and safety training

**6.3 Health and Safety Requirements for Family Providers** (658E(c)(2)(F), §§98.41, 98.16(j))

6.3.1 Are all family child care providers paid with CCDF funds subject to licensing under State law that is indicated in the NRCHSCC's compilation? If:

☐ Yes. Answer 6.3.2, skip 6.3.3, and go to 6.4.



- ☒ No. If no, **describe** which family child care providers are exempt from licensing under State law and answer 6.3.2 and 6.3.3. **\*See 6.3.3**

6.3.2 Have family child care provider requirements that relate to staff-child ratios, group size, or staff training been modified since the approval of the last State Plan? (§98.41(a)(2)&(3))

☐ Yes. If yes, **describe** the changes.

☒ No.

6.3.3 For family care that is NOT licensed, and therefore not reflected in NRCHSCC's compilation, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

**Family child care is defined as a facility within a residence occupied by the operator in which child care is regularly provided for no more than 6 children, including those living in the home. These providers are exempt from regulatory requirements if they care for a child or children related to the resident caregiver and for the child or children from one unrelated family. In addition to SC's current regulatory requirements reflected in NRCHSCC's compilation, the Lead Agency is exploring expanded health and safety standards for services provided under CCDF by family child care providers who are not voluntarily meeting standards above SC's regulatory requirements.**

**The Family Child Care Home Standards for the ABC Child Care Program address the following health and safety requirements for providers voluntarily meeting standards beyond regulatory requirements.**

- The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)
- Building and physical premises safety
- Health and safety training

#### **6.4 Health and Safety Requirements for In-Home Providers** (658E(c)(2)(F), §§98.41, 98.16(j))

6.4.1 Are all in-home child care providers paid with CCDF funds subject to licensing under the State law reflected in the NRCHSCC's compilation referenced above?

☐ Yes. Answer 6.4.2, skip 6.4.3, and go to 6.5.

☒ No. If no, **describe** which in-home child care providers are exempt from licensing under State law and answer 6.4.2 and 6.4.3.

**Family child care is defined as a facility within a residence occupied by the operator in which child care is regularly provided for no more than 6 children, including those living in the home. These providers are exempt from regulatory requirements if they care for a child or children related to the resident caregiver and for the child or children from one unrelated family.**

6.4.2 Have in-home health and safety requirements that relate to staff-child ratios, group size, or training been modified since the approval of the last State Plan? (§98.41(a)(2) & (3))

☐ Yes. If yes, **describe** the changes.

☒ No.

6.4.3 For in-home care that is NOT licensed, and therefore not reflected in NRCHSCC's compilation, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

**For in-home care that is NOT licensed, and therefore not reflected in NRCHSCC's compilation, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:**

- **The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations): See Attachment 6.4.3 – ABC Child Care Voucher System Self-Arranged Care Self-Certification,**
- **Building and physical premises safety: See Attachment 6.4.3 – ABC Child Care Voucher System Self-Arranged Care Self-Certification,**
- **Health and Safety Training: See Attachment 6.4.3 - ABC Child Care Voucher System Self-Arranged Care Self-Certification.**

## **6.5 Exemptions to Health and Safety Requirements**

At Lead Agency option, the following relatives: grandparents, great grandparents, aunts, uncles, or siblings (who live in a separate residence from the child in care) may be exempted from health and safety requirements. (658P(4)(B), §98.41(a)(1)(ii)(A)) Indicate the Lead Agency's policy regarding these relative providers:

☒ **All** relative providers are subject to the same requirements as described in sections 6.1 - 6.4 above, as appropriate; there are **no exemptions** for relatives or different requirements for them.

☐ **All** relative providers are **exempt** from all health and safety requirements.

☐ **Some or all** relative providers are subject to different health and safety requirements from those described in sections 6.1 - 6.4. The following describes those requirements and identifies the relatives they apply to:

## **6.6 Enforcement of Health and Safety Requirements**

Each Lead Agency is required to certify that procedures are in effect to ensure that child care providers of services for which assistance is provided comply with all applicable health and safety requirements. (658E(c)(2)(E), §§98.40(a)(2), 98.41(d)) The following is a description of how health and safety requirements are effectively enforced:

- Are child care providers subject to routine unannounced visits (i.e., not specifically for the purpose of complaint investigation or issuance/renewal of a license)?

☒ Yes. If yes, **indicate** which providers are subject to routine unannounced visits and the frequency of those visits:

☐ No.

**Unannounced visits for compliance with health and safety issues are conducted with licensed/approved providers and registered church providers by the Lead Agency. Child care providers voluntarily agreeing to meet standards above state regulatory requirements in order to receive CCDF voucher funds are subject to quality monitoring visits by ABC Child Care Program Monitoring staff. These visits are programmatic in nature and include a minimal check of health and safety requirements. It is the goal of the Lead Agency to**

**conduct unannounced visits to these providers annually. Providers with identified problems are visited more often and are given strategic technical assistance.**

**The Lead Agency visits Level A providers every three years for a full review, and annually for an interim review, of their records. This may also apply to providers who are reviewed by other entities (as approved by the Lead Agency)**

- Are child care providers subject to background checks?  
☒ Yes. If yes, **indicate** which types of providers are subject to background checks and when such checks are conducted:  
  
☐ No.

**All licensed child care centers, licensed or registered family homes, licensed group homes, and licensed or registered church providers are subject to background checks provided by the State Law Enforcement Division (SLED) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).**

**SC Child Care Regulations include provisions that that the operator, director and staff shall not have been determined to have committed an act of child abuse or neglect. The Lead Agency maintains a Central Registry of Child Abuse and Neglect within the division of Human Services. Perpetrators of child abuse and neglect are entered in the Registry by order of the court. In order for a child care facility to be issued a license or a renewal, all staff at the facility must be checked against the Registry to satisfy this requirement. In addition, there is a check against the sexual abuse offender registry on all operators, directors, and staff.**

- Does the State require that child care providers report serious injuries that occur while a child is in care? ( Serious injuries are defined as injuries requiring medical treatment by a doctor, nurse, dentist, or other medical professional.)  
☒ Yes. If yes, **describe** the State's reporting requirements and how such injuries are tracked (if applicable):  
  
☐ No.

**Serious injuries are reported to the SCDSS child care regulatory division and become part of the child care provider's record. If child abuse or neglect is suspected, a report is made to the Out of Home Abuse and Neglect (OHAN) unit, located in the division of Human Services (state office) at the Lead Agency.**

- Other methods used to ensure that health and safety requirements are effectively enforced: **As noted above, other organizations providing on-site child care technical assistance routinely make reports to the Lead Agency regarding health and safety issues.**

**6.7 Exemptions from Immunization Requirements**

The State assures that children receiving services under the CCDF are age-appropriately immunized, and that the health and safety provisions regarding immunizations incorporate (by reference or otherwise) the latest recommendations for childhood immunizations of the State public health agency. (§98.41(a)(1))

The State exempts the following children from immunization (check all that apply):

- ☐ Children who are cared for by relatives (defined as grandparents, great grandparents, siblings (if living in a separate residence), aunts and uncles).
- ☐ Children who receive care in their own homes.
- ☒ Children whose parents object to immunization on religious grounds.
- ☒ Children whose medical condition contraindicates immunization.

## APPENDIX 1 PROGRAM ASSURANCES AND CERTIFICATIONS

**The Lead Agency, named in Part 1 of this Plan, assures that:**

- (1) upon approval, it will have in effect a program that complies with the provisions of the Plan printed herein, and is administered in accordance with the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 as amended, Section 418 of the Social Security Act, and all other applicable Federal laws and regulations. (658D(b), 658E(a))
- (2) the parent(s) of each eligible child within the State who receives or is offered child care services for which financial assistance is provided is given the option either to enroll such child with a child care provider that has a grant or contract for the provision of the service; or to receive a child care certificate. (658E(c)(2)(A)(i))
- (3) in cases in which the parent(s) elects to enroll the child with a provider that has a grant or contract with the Lead Agency, the child will be enrolled with the eligible provider selected by the parent to the maximum extent practicable. (658E(c)(2)(A)(ii))
- (4) the child care certificate offered to parents shall be of a value commensurate with the subsidy value of child care services provided under a grant or contract. (658E(c)(2)(A)(iii))
- (5) with respect to State and local regulatory requirements, health and safety requirements, payment rates, and registration requirements, State or local rules, procedures or other requirements promulgated for the purpose of the Child Care and Development Fund will not significantly restrict parental choice among categories of care or types of providers. (658E(c)(2)(A), §98.15(p), §98.30(g), §98.40(b)(2), §98.41(b), §98.43(c), §98.45(d))
- (6) that children receiving services under the CCDF are age-appropriately immunized, and that the health and safety provisions regarding immunizations incorporate (by reference or otherwise) the latest recommendation for childhood immunizations of the State public health agency. (§98.41(a)(1))
- (7) that CCDF Discretionary funds are used to supplement, not supplant, State general revenue funds for child care assistance for low-income families. (P.L. 109-149)

**The Lead Agency also certifies that:**

- (1) it has procedures in place to ensure that providers of child care services for which assistance is provided under the Child Care and Development Fund afford parents unlimited access to their children and to the providers caring for their children during the normal hours of operations and whenever such children are in the care of such providers. (658E(c)(2)(B))
- (2) it maintains a record of substantiated parental complaints and makes information regarding such complaints available to the public on request. (658E(c)(2)(C))
- (3) it will collect and disseminate to parents of eligible children and the general public, consumer education information that will promote informed child care choices. (658E(c)(2)(D))
- (4) it has in effect licensing requirements applicable to child care services provided in the State. (658E(c)(2)(E))
- (5) there are in effect within the State (or other area served by the Lead Agency), under State or local law, requirements designed to protect the health and safety of children; these requirements are applicable to child care providers that provide services for which assistance is made available under the Child Care and Development Fund. (658E(c)(2)(E))
- (6) procedures are in effect to ensure that child care providers of services for which assistance is provided under the Child Care and Development Fund comply with all applicable State or local health and safety requirements. (658E(c)(2)(G))
- (7) payment rates under the Child Care and Development Fund for the provision of child care services are sufficient to ensure equal access for eligible children to comparable child care services in the State or sub-State area that are provided to children whose parents are not eligible to receive assistance under this program or under any other Federal or State child care assistance programs. (658E(c)(4)(A))

## APPENDIX 2

### ELIGIBILITY AND PRIORITY TERMINOLOGY

For purposes of determining eligibility and priority for CCDF-funded child care services, lead agencies must **define** the following *italicized* terms. (658P, 658E(c)(3)(B))

- ***attending*** (a job training or educational program; include minimum hours if applicable) --Enrolled in one of the programs described under *job training and educational program*.
- ***in loco parentis*** - In the position or place of a parent. Guardianship does not have to be formalized through a court. This is determined on a case-by-case basis.
- ***job training and educational program*** –  
**Job training** - conducted in a classroom or on-the-job to teach marketable skills in the competitive labor market.  
**Educational program** - a public or private instructional program that results in a high school diploma, GED, Associate, or College degree. Must attend a minimum of six credit hours a semester.
- ***physical or mental incapacity*** (if the Lead Agency provides such services to children age 13 and older) - SCDDSN and SCDHEC, Babynet and Children's Rehabilitative Services caseworkers determine eligibility for child care under the ABC Special Needs Voucher set-aside.
- ***protective services*** - Children under the age of 13 whose physical health, mental health or welfare is harmed or threatened with substantial risk of harm by acts or omissions of parent(s), guardian(s), or others responsible for the child's well-being.
- ***residing with*** - To live in the same household with a parent(s), legal guardian, or other person standing in loco parentis for an extended or permanent period of time during the time period for which child care services are requested.
- ***special needs child*** - Children and teenagers under 19 will be eligible for ABC Special Needs Voucher Services if they meet at least one of the following criteria and are currently receiving services from one of our five referral organizations or their local school district:

**DEVELOPMENTALLY DELAYED:**

Children will be eligible if they are diagnosed by a qualified professional as having a developmental delay in one or more of the following areas:

1. Cognitive
2. Physical, including vision and hearing
3. Communication
4. Social or emotional
5. Adaptive development

Developmental delay for children is defined in the following ways:

- A. The delay must be (2) standard deviations below the mean on an appropriate standardized test in one or more areas of development, or the developmental level must be 30% below the chronological age in at least one area of development on an appropriate assessment instrument that yields scores in months.
- B. The delay must be 1.5 standard deviations below the mean on an appropriate standardized test in two or more areas of development, or the developmental level must be 22% below the chronological age in at least two areas of development on an appropriate assessment instrument that yields a score in months.

**INFORMED CLINICAL OPINION OPTION:**

Additional procedures may be used by qualified professionals under Babynet or DDSN standards to document the eligibility of children whose disabilities, developmental delays, or atypical development cannot be determined solely by standardized measures or for whom the standardized procedures are not appropriate for a given age or development area.

**DIAGNOSED PHYSICAL OR MENTAL CONDITIONS WITH PROBABILITY OF DEVELOPMENTAL DELAY:**

Children who are diagnosed by a qualified professional, in keeping with Babynet or DDSN standards for personnel and assessment, as having one or more of the following physical or mental conditions with high probability of developmental delay will be eligible for early intervention services. The Diagnosed Condition category refers to conditions with known

etiologies and developmental consequences, although delays in development may not be noted at the time of diagnosis, including, but not limited to:

1. Down Syndrome and other chromosomal abnormalities known to be associated with mental retardation or functional delay.
  2. Significant sensory impairments.
  3. Inborn errors of metabolism that have a high probability of resulting in developmental delay.
  4. Microcephaly.
  5. Severe attachment disorders and other serious behavior disorders with a high probability of leading to developmental delay.
  6. Persistent failure to thrive.
  7. Spina Bifida.
  8. Cerebral Palsy.
  9. Significant seizure disorders that have a high probability of resulting in developmental delay.
  10. Head trauma with residual neurological deficit.
  11. Fetal Alcohol Syndrome.
- **very low income** - Income that falls below the 175<sup>th</sup> percentile of poverty level.
  - **working** (include minimum hours if applicable) - Applicants are considered employed if they are working at an occupation where they are paid a wage/salary, or have a documented commitment of employment that will begin within two weeks from the date of child care application.
  - Additional terminology related to conditions of eligibility or priority established by the Lead Agency:
    - Family Independence (FI):** The purpose of child care through FI is to provide the necessary child care for families receiving a FI stipend to participate in approved employment, education, or training.
    - Transitional Child Care 1 (TCC1):** Individuals who have received a FI stipend and whose FI stipend is terminated due to an increase in earned income. Parent(s) must be working full time or part time; however, parent(s) attending school are eligible as long as they are employed at least part time.
    - Transitional Child Care 2 (TCC2):** Parent(s) who are eligible for the second 12 months of transitional child care. Parent(s) must be working full time or part time; however, parent(s) attending school are eligible as long as they are employed at least part time.
    - Transitional Child Care 24 (TCC24):** Individuals who become employed within two years of losing their FI stipend due to time limits may be eligible to receive child care assistance for up to two years from the date of application or the date of the first employment hire date, whichever comes first.
    - Family Independence – Child Only (FI/CO):** Children who reside with a caretaker/relative and only the child is receiving an FI stipend. The caretaker/relative must be employed full time, or at a minimum, part time. Employment (minimum of part time) may be in conjunction with school or training.
    - Young children:** Children from birth through age 5.
    - Non-Welfare Low-Income Families:** If funding is available, individuals who are not eligible under the Welfare Reform program may be determined eligible to assist them in continuing to work or attend school or training.

## **ATTACHMENT 3.1.1**

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## **01.00 INTRODUCTION**

**01.00** The South Carolina Department of Social Services (SCDSS) administers the Advocates for Better Care (ABC) Child Care Program. Child care services provided through this program are funded by the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG), and state dollars.

The purpose of the ABC Child Care Program is to increase the availability, affordability and the quality of child care for families in the state of South Carolina. Through increased availability of child care in the state, the choice of the child care provider will be left with the family. Further goals are to assist these families in achieving and maintaining economic self-support; or achieving and maintaining self-sufficiency.

### **01.10 Legal Base**

The following laws and regulations govern the administration of the child care services.

- \* 42 USC 1397c (Public Law 97-35, Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981)—Requires the state to publish an annual intended-use report for Title XX SSBG funds.
- \* The Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Act of 1990 (P.L.101-508) as amended by P.L.102-401, P.L. 102-586, P.L.103-171 and found at Title VI, Personal Responsibility and work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, P.L.104-193.

### **01.20 Basic Service Philosophy**

Since the passage of the South Carolina Family independence Act in 1995 and the related federal Welfare Reform law of 1996, funding priority for ABC Child Care assistance is given to parents participating in the state's Family Independence Program.

Child Care is essential to parents who are participating in a training program, securing employment or pursuing educational opportunities, as well as parents participating in South Carolina's Family Independence Program (FI).

### **Use of Policy Manual**

The policy manual will be used by SCDSS staff to determine eligibility for assistance in a fair, consistent, and timely manner. All SCDSS staff are responsible for exercising prudent and reasonable judgment when applying policy.

If a worker is unable to reach a decision about a specific situation that is not addressed in the manual, the worker will contact the Control Center Supervisor or other identified supervisors for a decision. If a decision is still unable to be made, the program director will be consulted.

ALL SCDSS child care staff will be held accountable for carrying out policies and procedures of the program in a timely, accurate, courteous, and non-discriminatory manner.

### **Parental Choice**

Parents are legally and morally responsible for their children and have the right to select the child care provider of their choice. Finding suitable child care is one of the most important things that parents do. The goal of any interaction between staff and parents is to ensure that the applicant receives adequate information to make choices that provide stable and reliable child care. Parents receiving ABC Child Care assistance are offered a broad range of options in addressing their child care needs. Clients eligible for child care are provided a listing of approved enhanced/NAEYC providers to assist them with finding child care.

Parents have the option of choosing the provider who will care for their child, whether it is a center, family or group day care home, church, synagogue, school, employer, or self-arranged care by relatives or friends. **NOTE:** Child Protective Service and Foster Care child care cases must select only licensed child care facilities. (See Section...)

Subsidized, quality child care enables and encourages parents to move from welfare to work. Parents who feel confident and secure with their child care choices are more productive employees, and the goal of welfare Reform is to prepare parents for self-sufficiency.

### **01.30 Child Care Services Goals (Based on Funding Availability)**

The goals of the child care services are:

- (1) To promote family independence by giving priority for the use of child care funds to Welfare Reform clients through the Family Independence Act;
- (2) To enhance the quality and increase the supply of child care for all families, including those who receive no direct assistance under the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) or the social Services Block Grant (SSBG);
- (3) To provide parents with a broad range of options in addressing their child care needs;
- (4) To strengthen the role of the family;
- (5) To improve the quality of, and coordination among, child care programs and early childhood development programs; and
- (6) To increase the availability of early childhood development and before-school and after-school care services (school-age care).

The ABC program incorporates the following elements which are beneficial to families, providers, and local communities:

- (1) Families are offered information regarding accessible child care arrangements.
- (2) Child care providers are afforded opportunities for participating in the delivery of paid care, less paperwork, timely payment, resources for staff training and program improvement.
- (3) The consolidated management of publicly funded child care results in effective administration, planning, and reporting.

At many levels, information and referral options are being provided and applicants are learning about child care and what is available in the communities. A guiding principle of the ABC Program is a commitment to provide the applicant with information that allows informed choices regarding child care arrangements.

## **02.00 INTAKE AND APPLICATION**

### **02.00 INTAKE AND APPLICATION**

(Priority of funding verbiage) Since the passage of the South Carolina Family Independence (FI) Act, the majority of child care applications comes through the Department of Social Services (DSS) which is the focal point for FI/Welfare Reform. However, when funds are available for other non-welfare low-income clients, individuals may apply for services through DSS, enhanced providers, or other entities that may be identified by SCDHHS. **SEE INTAKE AND APPLICATION PROCEDURES IN CHAPTER 02 OF THE ABC CHILD CARE PROGRAM PROCEDURES MANUAL.**

The ABC Program, in addition to FI/Welfare Reform participants, certain funds are set aside and designated to serve specific target populations. Intake for these target populations is handled as follows:

- (1) Applications for services through funds set aside for child protective services families and foster parents are handled by DSS;
- (2) Applicants applying for services through funds set aside for special needs children are referred to the Department of Disabilities and Special Needs (DDSN); and
- (3) Applicants applying for services through funds set aside for Head Start are referred by Head Start providers.
- (4) Applications for services provided through funds set aside for before-school and/or after-school care is handled by State Department of Education (SDE).

### **02.10 Accessing the ABC Program**

Families interested in applying for child care assistance may access the ABC Child Care Program through the local DSS office or by contacting the ABC Child Care Control Center at 1-800-476-0199. Child care assistance is based on available funding and specific eligible criteria. (See eligibility categories).

### **02.20 Application/Eligibility**

The application is the primary document used for determining eligibility; however, other information such as pay stubs, tax forms or other written verification is critical to determining eligibility and is used in conjunction with the application. Every effort must be made to ensure that the application for child care is keyed into the ABC System within 15 calendar days from the date the application is received.

Eligibility is determined at least once every 12 months, and more often if the applicant reports an increase in income. If the applicant meets eligibility criteria for funding under which they are applying, a determination is made that the family is eligible. When the family is eligible, all children under age 13 within the family are eligible. A family may meet all eligibility requirements however it does not ensure a family will receive child care under the ABC Program due to limited funding.

### **02.30 The Control Center**

The ABC Control Center, hereafter called the Control Center, is located at SCDSS. Staff are responsible for the daily operation of the child care program, coordinating child care eligibility and selection and payment to providers. Toll-free lines for clients and providers are operated by Control Center staff. Clients and providers may access the ABC Program by calling the toll-free telephone numbers between the hours of 8:00 am - 5:00pm Monday thru Friday. The toll-free lines are designed to provide information to clients receiving child care and to resolve provider payment problems or other situations encountered by clients or providers.

### **02.40 Applicant Rights And Responsibilities**

During the intake process applicants are informed of their rights and responsibilities and told they must provide accurate information to establish eligibility. Applicants are also informed that falsifying information for eligibility purposes will subject them to prosecution under applicable state and federal criminal statutes.

#### **The applicant has the right to:**

- (1) Choose a center, family child care home, group child care home, church facility, or care by a neighbor, friend or relative. **Clients receiving services under Child Protective Services or Foster Care may choose only licensed facilities or programs.**
- (2) Receive a fair hearing, regarding any decision, which results in the denial or termination of

services provided that decision is not due to lack of funding. Notice of Appeal shall be in writing to Individual and Provider Rights, SCDSS, P.O. Box 1520, Columbia, SC 29202-1520.

- (3) Make complaints, or discuss areas of concern or suggestions regarding the ABC Program or your child care provider by calling 1-800-763-2223.
- (4) Visit your child(ren) anytime he or she is in the provider's care.

**The applicant has the responsibility to:**

- (1) Provide current and accurate verification of gross family income, family size, age of child(ren), and employment, school, or training.
- (2) Report all changes in gross family income, family size, address, employment/school/training within 10 calendar days after the change(s) occurs.
- (3) Pay weekly client fee (based on family size and income) to provider before service delivery. Parents are responsible for the difference between the maximum amount the ABC program pays and what the provider charges.
- (4) Pay for child care services when an appeal is in process.
- (5) Get approval from the ABC Child Care Control Center before transferring to another provider.
- (6) Give advance notice before terminating services.
- (7) Choose a child care provider within 15 calendar days from the date of the notification of eligibility.
- (8) Comply with ABC Child Care program attendance policies in using child care services.
- (9) Pay for services received before or after the authorized dates of service.

**Note: Failure to comply with these responsibilities could result in services being denied or terminated.**

**Non-Discrimination**

In accordance with Title VI Section 601 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Title V Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, DSS will administer programs so that no person shall, solely because of race, color, national origin or qualified handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefit of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity administered by the agency.

**02.50 Maximum Care Allowed**

Clients may receive up to a maximum of 52 weeks of care during any one-year eligibility period. This may be full-time care, half-time care, less-than half-time or a combination of the three.

**Note:** Less than half time care may be used only in conjunction with a full or half time care arrangement. It may not be used alone and may not be used to pay the same child care provider.

**02.60 Assessment of Fees**

Within the ABC Program, there are client fees and registration fees.

**02.61 Client Fees**

Client fees are based on family size and gross monthly income and are assessed according to the Child Care Fee Scale. This is a weekly fee and applies to all children receiving care. Each provider is responsible for collecting this fee in advance of service delivery. **The ABC Program assumes no responsibility for collection or payment of client fees.** It is recommended that the provider maintain

records to document payment **or non-**payment of fees. Whether the parent pays by check or cash, the provider must give the client a receipt for payment of fees. Receipts must indicate the client's name/Social Security number, amount paid, date paid and period of service for which the client is paying.

**Note: Foster parents and clients participating in the FI program do not pay fees. However, if the providers' rate exceeds the maximum rate allowed by the ABC Program, the foster parents and FI clients are responsible for paying the difference to the provider.**

#### **02.62 Registration Fees**

Registration fees are set amounts established by the provider to cover costs not included in the weekly rate. The ABC Program will pay registration fees to providers up to a maximum of \$100 per child per eligibility period. Regardless of the number of different providers who may provide services to the child during the eligibility period, total registration fees paid will not exceed the \$100 maximum. The fee must be requested during the child's authorization period and while the child is actually attending the program. Requests for registration fees will not be honored after the child has left the program or after services have ended. The fee must be the same as that charged to all other parents in the program.

**NOTE: Registration fees are not paid to SAC/IHC child care providers.**

#### **02.70 Allowable Absences**

Attendance requirements are explained to clients during the application process. A child is allowed a maximum of 31 absences per 52 weeks of care that are funded and connected. If the child is authorized for less care, they will receive a pro-rated share of allowable absences based on the number of weeks of services they receive (See Scale of Allowable Absences). Client's receive the scale of allowable absences in their eligibility packet once they have been determined eligible and keyed into the ABC System. When clients apply at the county offices, they are given this information at that time. Services may be terminated if the child(ren) exceeds the allowable number of absences. When a family is authorized to receive child care, it is assumed the family needs these services and will use it on a daily basis. If there are legitimate reasons for a child to be absent, the client and/or the provider may seek a waiver of excessive absences. If no waiver is granted, and the child is absent for ten (10) consecutive days and does not attend the facility on the eleventh(11<sup>th</sup>) day, the provider should discontinue billing and notify the Control Center.

Providers are paid the weekly rate for the child even when absences occur. Children may have individual weekly scheduled days that they attend the facility. Failure to attend on these days must be reported as an absence.

**EXAMPLE:** A parent may work three 12-hour shifts on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday and decide to keep the child at home on Wednesday and Friday. The child would not be considered absent these two days (Wednesday & Friday (however, if the child failed to attend on the other days, they would be considered absent.)

Since providers report absences after the absences have occurred, the child will be terminated and a letter will be sent to the client and the provider when a child exceeds the number of allowable absences.

## **02.71 Waiver of Absences**

DSS will be responsible for the waiver of any absences. County DSS offices are responsible for the review and determination of good cause for waiver requests for the following categories:

- FI
- Protect/Foster
- FI/CO

ABC Control Center are responsible for the review and determination of good cause for waiver requests for the following categories:

- TCC1
- TCC2
- TCC24
- TCC/FS
- All state office funded categories

Absences will be waived only when good cause has been determined. Good cause exists if circumstances prevent the child(ren) from attending the child care provider. All situations are different and the SSS or Control Center staff must use prudent judgement in determining whether or not good cause exists and be able to justify any waiver determination. Client's statements may be accepted in the absence of other documentation such as doctor's statements, court papers, etc. Examples of good cause include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Illness of child or custodial parent (with or without doctor's statement)

Note; if the child is chronically ill, possibly secure a statement from the physician.

- 2) Child's absence from the home; visits to the absent parent or other relative. If applicable, obtain a copy of the court order for court ordered visitation.

Note: If known prior to the child being absent, the worker should make contact with the child care provider to determine if the provider will be holding a slot for the child. If so, the worker should request a start/stop date for the child care services. (See Break in Service Section)

All documentation to support waivers is to be maintained in the client's file, either at the DSS county office or the ABC Control Center and an entry placed in the client's memo field. When client's are terminated based on excessive absences, a letter is sent to the client, the child care provider, and the SSS when applicable.

## **03.00 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA AND CATEGORIES**

**03.00** The applicant requests child care, the appropriateness of the request is evaluated and eligibility criteria are reviewed to determine eligibility.

### **Residency**

In order to receive child care services through the ABC Child Care Program, the applicant must be a legal resident of the state of South Carolina. When residency is questionable, the applicant may be asked to submit proof of residency.

### **Citizenship (C03B)**

The intent of the ABC Child Care Program is to provide child care services to eligible persons who meet the following criteria:

- 1) Applicant is a citizen of the United States (native born or naturalized);
- 2) Child is a US citizen;
- 3) Aliens lawfully admitted for permanent residence prior to August 23, 1996;
- 4) Applicant or child is a legal resident of the US.

**Note:** Non-citizen families who are not legal residents may receive services in the following instances if all other eligibility criteria are met: (1) if the child needs child care to support a Child Protective Services case of the child is receiving Foster Care services, or (2) if the child meets special needs child care criteria.

### **03.10 Family Definition**

All family members are identified in order to determine family size and the family's gross monthly income. For eligibility purposes, the family is defined as one or more adults and children related by blood or law who reside in the same household. The following circumstances are to be considered when defining the family:

- (1) Military spouses, not residing in the same household, are considered a part of the family;
- (2) Emancipated minors are defined as minors whose parents have entirely surrendered the responsibility of the care and custody of the minor and the right to the minor's earnings and are under no legal obligation to support the minor. An emancipated minor with children living in the home of his or her parent is counted as a separate household. A minor is emancipated if he or she meets one of the following conditions:
  - a) The court legally released the minor from parental control.
  - b) Both parents of the minor have signed a statement of emancipation.
  - c) The minor has legally married.
  - d) The minor has been legally divorced or become widowed, but has not returned to parental support.

Un-emancipated minors are counted in the family size of their parents. Applications for child care will be taken in the parents' name and the parents must meet all eligibility criteria unless the following circumstances apply:

- e) The teen parent has no parent or legal guardian whose whereabouts is known
  - f) No parent or legal guardian of the teen parent allows the teen to live in his/her home
  - g) The teen parent lived apart from his/her own parent or legal guardian for a period of at least one year before the birth of the dependant child(ren).
  - h) The physical or emotional health or safety of the teen parent or dependant child(ren) would be jeopardized if they resided in the same residence with the major parent or legal guardian.
  - i) There is otherwise good cause for the teen parent or dependant child(ren) to receive assistance while living apart from the major parent, legal guardian, another adult relative, or an adult supervised supportive living arrangement.

Note: Documentation of good cause includes, but are not limited to, Written statements from at least two corroborating persons showing that it is not in the best interest of the teen parent to live with his/her parent or legal guardian. One of these corroborating persons should be a professional such as a school counselor, social worker, or mental health professional.
- (3) Stepparents are responsible for the care of their stepchildren and are counted as a member of the family.
  - (4) College students up to age 21 who are supported by the parents are counted as a member of



- the family.
- (5) Foster children are considered a one-person family and only the child's income is counted. Even though the child is considered a one-person family, the foster parents must be employed or in school or training for child care to be authorized.
  - (6) Incarcerated family members, such as a parent or sibling, are not included in the family size.

**NOTE: Adults who are not married and who do not consider themselves common-law spouses are not considered part of the same family group unless they are parents of the same child.**

### **03.20 Income Definition**

For eligibility purposes, gross family income is defined as the source and amount of current gross income earned by all adult family members through the receipt of wages, tips, salaries, and/or commissions, piece-rate payments, cash bonuses earned, and armed services pay, including uniform and living allowances.

The family's gross monthly income is calculated by adding the monthly income of each adult family member. Income such as child support payments or Social Security benefits for children under age 18 should also be included. Family members living temporarily away from home must be included in the family size and their income included in the calculation.

For applicants who receive wages weekly, the weekly salary is multiplied by 4.33 to arrive at the gross monthly income. For applicants who receive wages every other week, the salary is multiplied by 2.16. Seasonal income, income received on a quarterly basis, or irregular income must be averaged.

The applicant must provide verification of income from working or participation in school and training. This verification must be submitted with the signed application before it can be processed. Methods of verification are included in the sources of income.

### **03.21 Income Inclusions**

The following types of income are to be considered when computing the amount of gross income for eligibility purposes:

- **Family Independence Stipend**  
This is an assistance payment to aid families with dependent children who are in the financial assistance budget. The client's current Medicaid card or contract with Economic Services may be used to verify FI stipend eligibility.
- **Alimony**  
This is an allowance, usually ordered by the Family Court, paid to an individual by the spouse or former spouse after a legal separation or divorce or while legal action is pending. This may be verified through the court or, if paid voluntarily, by the person making payments.
- **Child Support**  
This is an allowance, usually ordered by the Family Court, for the support of a child or children. This may be verified through the court or, if paid voluntarily, by the person making payments.
- **Social Security**  
This includes Social Security pensions, survivor's benefits, and permanent disability insurance benefits paid by the Social Security Administration before deductions for medical insurance. Railroad retirement insurance benefits from the U.S. Government are

also included.

- **Veterans' Pensions**

This includes money paid periodically by the Veterans Administration to disabled members of the armed forces or to survivors of deceased veterans, as well as subsistence paid to veterans for education and on-the-job training, and "refunds" paid to veterans as G.I. insurance premiums.

- **Pension and Annunities**

This includes pensions or retirement benefits paid to a retired person or his her survivors By a former employer or by a union, either directly or through an insurance company.

- **Unemployment Compensation**

Compensation received from government unemployment insurance agencies or private or public insurance companies for injuries incurred at work. The cost of this insurance must have been paid by the employer and not the individual. The length of time the individual is expected to be out of work due to injury should be included in the narrative.

- **Wages or Salary** (Includes seasonal work/income)

Total money received for work performed as an employee, including wages, salary, commissions, tips, piece-rate payments, cash bonuses earned, and armed forces pay, including uniform and living allowances. This is to be the gross amount before deductions are made for taxes, bonds, pensions, insurance, union dues, and similar purposes. The best form of verification is an employer's written statement of income. Other methods of verification are the following:

- (1) Pay stubs for the last full month or the longest current time available;
- (2) Pay envelopes for the last full month or the longest current time available;
- (3) Last W-2 Form or Income Tax Form;
- (4) Written statement from the employer;
- (5) Military Leave Earning Statement (LES).

- **Non-Farm Self Employment**

Adjusted gross income or net income earned in self-employment in one's own business, professional enterprise or partnership. Net income means gross receipts minus expenses. Gross receipts are the value of all goods sold and services rendered. Expenses include the following:

- (1) Cost of goods purchased;
- (2) Rent, heat, light/power;
- (3) Depreciation charged;
- (4) Wages and salaries paid;
- (5) Business taxes (not personal income tax);
- (6) Similar costs.

The most recent income tax return is the best method of verification. If a return is not available, copies of receipts of purchase, records of sale, or any other records or statements of expenses and profits should be used.

- **Farm Self-Employment**

Gross receipts minus expenses from the operation of a farm by a person on his own Account as an owner, renter, or sharecropper. Gross receipts include the following:

- (1) Value of all products sold;
- (2) Government crop loans;
- (3) Monies received under the Agricultural Stabilization Act;
- (4) Monies received from the rental of farm equipment to others;
- (5) Incidental receipts from the sale of wood, sand, gravel, and similar items.

Operations expenses include the following:

- (1) Cost of feed, fertilizer, seed, and other farming supplies;
- (2) Cash wages paid to farm hands;
- (3) Depreciation charges;
- (4) Cash rent;
- (5) Interest on farm mortgages;
- (6) Farm building repairs;
- (7) Farm taxes (not state and federal income taxes).

The value of food, fuel, or other farm products used for family living is not included as part of net income. The most recent income tax return is the best source of verification. If a return was not filed or is unavailable, copies of receipts of purchase, records of sale, or any other records or statements of expenses and profits should be used to determine net income. Farm income is usually available only at the end of the crop year, but may be prorated over the next 12 months.

- **Dividends from stocks and/or Bonds**

Benefits received by a person who holds shares of stock (interest in a company) or bonds (interest bearing certificates), or benefits received from profits of an insurance company with whom he/she has a policy, or as a result of his/her membership in an association which shares its profits with its members. The amount received may be documented by placing a copy of the individual's dividend statement in the record.

- **Interest on Savings or Bonds**

Benefits accrued as a result of a savings account or bonds. This includes all such income whether paid directly or reinvested in the savings account or bonds.

- **Income from Estate or Trusts**

Periodic receipts from estates or trust funds. This may be verified through probate court or the institution handling the trust fund.

- **Net Rental Income**

Income from the rental of a house, store, or other property, minus expenses necessary to the upkeep of the rental property. This amount may be verified by copies of rent receipts and expense records placed in the file. Further verification should be obtained from those persons paying a rental fee to assure accuracy.

- **Income from Boarders/Lodgers**

Income from boarders/lodgers minus expenses necessary to provide room and/or board. This may be verified in the same manner as net rental income.

- **Net Royalties**

This includes the following:

- (1) The share of proceeds paid to the applicant as owner of a right (for example, a patent) for permission to use it or operate it;
- (2) The share of proceeds paid to one from whom land rich in oil or minerals is leased;
- (3) The share, usually a specified percentage, or proceeds from the work of a composer or writer and paid to the individual.

This amount should be verified by placing a copy of the royalty contract in the record.

- **General Assistance**

This is a state-funded assistance payment to the totally and temporarily disabled. This may be verified by checking the assistance payments case record.

### 03.22 Income Exclusions

The following types of income are **not** to be considered when computing the amount of gross income eligibility purposes:

- **Supplemental Security Income (SSI)**  
This refers to Supplemental Security Income issued through the Social Security Administration and the Optional Supplement issued by the Department of Social Services.
- **Funds Connected with Judgments of Indian Claims**  
These are per capita payments or funds held in trust for any individual in satisfaction of a Judgment of the Indian Claims Commission or the United States Court Claims.
- **Income from Property Sold**  
Money received from the sale of property (such as stocks, bonds, a house, or a car) is to be Disregarded unless such individual was engaged in the business of selling such property.
- **Supplemental and Special Food Programs**  
Exclude the value of supplemental food assistance under the National School Lunch Act, as amended.
- **Payment from Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970**
- **Children's Earnings**  
No inquiry shall be made regarding the earned income of a dependent child under 18 years of age.
- **Certain Loans and Grants**  
Disregard income from loss and grants, such as scholarships, obtained and used under Conditions that preclude their use for current living costs. Also, disregard any loans or Grants to any undergraduate student for educational purposes made or issued under any program administered by the Commissioner of Education under the Higher Education Act (e.g., Pell or Carl Perkins grants).
- **Home Products**  
Disregard the value of home produce used for household consumption.
- **Value of Meals Received Through Special Programs**  
The value of meals received through congregate dining programs, etc., is excluded regardless of funding source for such programs.
- **Volunteers in Services to America (VISTA) Income**  
The income received by volunteers under the VISTA program must be disregarded.
- **Foster Care Board Payments**  
These payments, including clothing allowances, are excluded from the income of both foster parents and foster children.
- **Earnings Received Under Job Training Partnership Act of 1983**
- **Special Service Supplemental Benefits for Adoption**
- **Lump Sum Payments from Social Security, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and child support payments in arrearage.**
- **Bank Withdrawals**
- **Borrowed Money**
- **Tax Refunds (to include payment or refunds from Earned Income Tax Credit or Dependent Care Credits.)**
- **Gifts**
- **Lump Sum Inheritances or Lump sum Insurance Payments**
- **Capital Gains**
- **Value of Food Stamp Allotment**
- **Income from Work-Study Programs**  
Income from work-study will not be counted as income.

- **United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Donated Food Value.**

### **03.30 Verification Requirements**

In order to be eligible for child care assistance, both parents must be working, in school or in training program, or permanently or temporarily disabled. If income is a condition of eligibility, the applicant must verify income from employment, enrollment in school or participation in a training program. Also, applicants who are disabled must verify income and submit a doctor's statement to verify disability. This information must be submitted with the signed application.

Pay stubs from the most recent thirty (30) days are required to verify income and work. If pay stubs or tax forms are not available, written documentation must be completed by an authorized representative of the employer. Applicants attending school or a training program must submit a copy of their school schedule and/or proof of paid registration for the current term to the ABC Program. The burden of proof of income and work, school or training status is upon the applicant.

### **03.31 Work**

Applicants are considered employed if they are working at an occupation where they are paid a wage/salary, or have a documented commitment of employment that will begin within two weeks from the application date. Applicants participating in a work-study program will be considered employed. However, their income from the work-study program is not considered. Volunteer activity is not considered employment.

Applicants who are self-employed are required to submit a copy of their individual income tax return use the adjusted gross income in order to obtain an accurate estimate of income. Verification should be the most current federal income tax form submitted to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). For purposes of eligibility determination, we cannot request a copy of the profit/loss statement as this is a reflection of how much that business made for the year, not the actual client.

In order to receive child care services, the parent/guardian must be:

- employed full-time      average of 30 or more hours per week.
- employed part-time:    less than 30 hours per week.

Note: When both parents are in the same household, both parents must be working or one or both parents must be disabled.

Applicants must be determined eligible for child care based on the number of hours per week child care is needed. In addition to the number of hours the client is working, in school or training, the actual hours at the job, school or training and travel time are considered. The hours child care is needed may not coincide with the work hours of the parent. For example, a parent who works third shift needs to sleep during the day; therefore, child care may be approved during the day to help support the family. However, study time is not considered. The goal is to use a reasonable approach that supports the family's efforts to be productive. Non-welfare reform parents must need a minimum of 15 hours of child care services per week per child.

### **03.32 Training/School**

Applicants are considered in job-training if the training is to teach marketable skills in the competitive labor market. Non-Welfare Reform parents must need a minimum of 15 hours of child care per week per child.

Applicants are considered participating in an educational program if the program results in high school diploma, General Equivalency Diploma (GED) or Associate or college degree and requires a minimum of six hours of classroom instruction per week. Online computer courses from an accredited college or university that count as credit hours leading to a degree are acceptable courses for post-secondary education. Verification will be required.

### **3.33 Interrupted Activities**

For parents with interrupted employment, education or training, the applicant is expected to notify the ABC Control Center or DSS Supportive Services Specialist (SSS) of all changes within ten calendar days. If employment has not been obtained or the approved activity has not begun, care will cease at the end of the 30-day period following the interruption. In such cases, the client and provider will be sent a Denial/Termination Letter.

### **3.40 Signature Requirements**

The child care application must be signed and dated by the applicant before the application is processed and before services are delivered. Applications that are incomplete are returned to the applicant requesting the additional information.

Note: Signed applications are not required for families moving from FI to their first year of Transitional Child Care. Refer to Section 03.52.01 of this Policy Manual.

### **3.50 Specific Program Criteria**

The DSS staff assesses all current FI stipend recipients to determine mandatory participation in FI. Applicants calling the toll-free line are questioned to see if they should be referred to DSS FI. Any individual who receives a FI stipend may apply for ABC child care assistance. Those who are employed, in school, or in training may be eligible for child care without cost. DSS staff completes the application for these individuals and for working individuals who are terminated within 12 months from FI benefits due to earned income. These working individuals may be eligible for child care under TCC1 program. DSS also takes applications for individuals who may be eligible to receive a second year of child care assistance (TCC2) if they are working and meet the income guidelines, and for those who become employed within two years of becoming eligible for an FI stipend due to time limits.

**Note: A Seamless Eligibility System (SES) allows DSS workers the option of continuing ABC Child Care services for families moving from FI to their first year of Transitional Child Care (TCC1) without requiring a new signed application from the client. Refer to Section 03.52.01 of this Policy Manual.**

The applicant is informed during intake that pay stubs for the most recent 30 days or another form of written documentation is required to verify income and work. If the applicant attends school or a training program, a copy of their school schedule and/or proof of paid registration for the current term is required. The applicant is also informed that the provider they choose is required to enroll or be accepted within the ABC Program.

Since it is critical for applicants seeking child care to have this care arranged in a timely manner, every effort is made to ensure all completed applications are keyed into the ABC System within 15 days of receipt. Clients may be eligible for more than one eligibility category. However, the eligibility category with the most stringent eligibility requirements for which the applicant qualifies takes priority. As a family's eligibility changes, clients are switched from one eligibility

category to another based on the client's status and availability of funds. A new application (signature required) is needed when the eligibility category changes. Parents may apply for child care services for dependent child(ren) who reside in the caretaker's household. Clients may be eligible for child care assistance if they fall within one of the following categories:

### **3.51 Family Independence (FI)**

The Family Independence act of 1995 established the FI Program administered by the Department of Social Services (DSS). The purpose of child care through FI is to provide the necessary child care for families to participate in approved employment, education, or training. A fundamental goal of FI is to emphasize parental responsibility and self-sufficiency. Parents must seek employment and/or training to become self-sufficient and to support their families.

DSS must provide support services such as child care to enable the parent to move into employment, education or training. Parents participating in FI are not required to pay a fee to the provider.

In order to receive child care through this category, the individual must meet the following criteria:

- (1) Be receiving a FI stipend.
- (2) Be a FI participant working, in school, in training, complying with the family plan as agreed upon with the FI case manager, or participating in a FI countable component(s) or attempting to start a countable FI component within two weeks.
- (3) Have a need for child care for a child under age 13.
- (4) Be attempting to remedy a sanction (up to 30 days).
- (5) In the case of an employed FI recipient who becomes temporarily disabled and unable to work, he or she may continue to receive child care assistance as long as he or she remains employed and can verify that they are on leave from their employment.

**Family Independence-Child Only (FI/CO)** A Parent/Caretaker relative who is receiving an FI benefit (FI Child Only case) for a child may be eligible to apply for FI/CO child care. These cases contain caretaker relatives, SSI parents, or disqualified parents. The following criteria must be used in determining child care eligibility:

- 1) Child must be an FI or SSI recipient
- 2) The parent/caretaker relative must be employed at least part time (15-29 hours) at the time of application and remain employed to continue receiving services. Employment may be in conjunction with training or attending school. Exception: A parent(s) who receives SSI may be eligible for child care assistance if he/she is either employed at least part time or participating in an activity (training or education) that will enable the parent to become employed in the future.
- 3) A parent/caretaker relative must meet income guidelines to be eligible for FI/CO.
- 4) Must pay a fee based on his/her income.

Individuals who meet qualifications will be eligible to receive 12 months of services and may re-apply for an additional 12 months as funding permits and as long as the child continues to receive FI benefits. The application must be filed in the name of the parent/caretaker relative and keyed into the ABC Child Care Voucher System using the FI/CO eligibility category. FI/CO cases that close due to income exceeding the limit are eligible to apply for transitional child care services.

### **3.52 Transitional Child Care**

Individuals who have received a FI Benefit and whose FI Benefit is terminated due to employment, an increase in earned income, expiration of earned income disregards, waiver of earned income disregards,

or voluntary closure requests when excluded income exceeds the income limit are eligible to apply for transitional child care assistance. Parents based on their earned income and the fact that they are employed. Parents receiving child care through this category are required to pay a portion of their child care cost through a client fee to the provider.

There are four separate transitional categories:

### **Transitional Child Care 1 (TCC1)**

Eligibility for TCC1 begins the first month of FI Benefit ineligibility.

To receive child care through this category, the individual must:

- (1) Be terminated from FI due to an increase in earned income.
- (2) Have received an FI benefit in the month immediately preceding the first month of ineligibility.
- (3) Have a need for child care for a child under age 13.
- (4) Be working full-time or part-time (second parent may be permanently or temporarily disabled—verification required). If working and attending school, it must be for a minimum of 30 hours per week.
- (5) Be income-eligible based on current income standards.

#### **03.52.01 Seamless Eligibility for TCC1**

ABC Child Care service should be continued without interruption for families moving from FI child care to the first year of TCC. A new signed application from the client will not be required. To allow for continued child care services, the following steps must be completed by the SSS:

- 1) If the families FI benefits terminated due to earned income (EX, Loss of disregards (DX, 24 months time limits (TL), full family sanction (FA, AT, RJ, DS, IN), or child support (CX), the case manager must print a copy of the CAP2 and HOSU screen and forward them to the SSS on the day the 10 day cash benefit termination notice is sent.
- 2) Upon receipt of this information, the SSS will verify on the ABC Voucher System, if the family is currently receiving child care.
- 3) If the participant is currently receiving FI child care, the SSS will verbally contact him/her within 2 days to determine if there continues to be a need for child care services, confirm family size, ensure that client's income meets TCC1 eligibility criteria and verify provider and child(ren) needing assistance. This attempt should be documented in the case record.  
Note: A family does not need to sign a new application and there is no need to have a new application on file. However, a copy of the original application must be on file for all participants.
- 4) The SSS must update the original application with the new information if any. This should include the date the update was completed and the new application number from the ABC Voucher System.
- 5) If immediate contact is made, and verification of the information in number 3 is completed, the SSS will request a close out from the Control Center. Once the close out is obtained, the SSS will insert the participants information no later than 30 days from the date of the FI benefits closure, into the ABC Voucher System based on current data on the CAP2 and HOSU screens for the new eligibility period, and authorized up to 52 weeks of child care. The SSS must ensure that the information is keyed timely and that there are no breaks in service between eligibility categories. The ABC Voucher System generates the eligibility notices that are sent to the client and provider notifying continued eligibility.



If the SSS is **not** able to make contact with the parent within 5 days of the request, the following actions must be taken:

- 1) Request a termination of child care services through the ABC Voucher System based on the effective date of the FI benefit case closure or based on the termination policy, whichever is greater.

Participant not receiving child care:

If the FI participant is not receiving FI child care at the time the case manager sends the CHIP print screens to the SSS, he/she is not entitled to seamless eligibility for TCC1. Upon verifying that a participant is not receiving FI child care, the SSS should indicate this on the CHIP screen and send it back to the case manager. The SSS will have the participant complete an application if child care services are needed.

### **03.53 Transitional Child Care 2 (TCC2)**

The transitional child care, second year (TCC2), eligibility category is for:

- 1) Individuals whose first year of TCC, TCC/FS, or TCC24 is ending. An additional 52 weeks eligibility period may begin under TCC2 when any of the aforementioned categories end. The ABC Voucher System sends a automated notification to the parent and provider 60 days prior to services ending.
- 2) Former FI participants that were eligible to apply for TCC but failed to do so.

Eligibility for continued child care through TCC2 may continue for up to one year only. It may begin effective the first Monday after TCC1 has ended. TCC2 cannot be retroactive, and the participant cannot be reimbursed for any payments made prior to the established date of eligibility. If he participant does not request TCC2 until after the second 12 month eligibility period begins, only the remainder of the second 12 months may be authorized. A new application is required and income eligibility must be re-determined.

Parents receiving child care through this category are required to pay a portion of their child care cost through a client fee to the provider.

To receive child care through this category, the individual must:

- (1) Not be receiving an FI benefit and must have been eligible for TCC1.
- (2) Be working full-time or part-time (second parent may be permanently or temporarily disabled—verification required). If working and attending school, it must be for a minimum of 30 hours per week.
- (3) Have a need for child care for a child under age 13.
- (4) Be income-eligible based on current income standards.

### **03.54 Transitional Child Care 24 (TCC24)**

This eligibility category is used for individuals who become employed within two years of becoming ineligible for an FI stipend due to time limits. Once they become employed, if they remain eligible, they may apply for and may receive child care assistance for up to two years from the date of application or the date of the first employment hire date, whichever comes first. The employment start date could be from the date of the case closure or any time within the 24 month period from the date of closure. The SSS must determine the number of months remaining in the 24 months eligibility period beginning from the date the client became employed and applied for child care. If the client becomes unemployed within the 24 month period and obtains subsequent employment, the client will be eligible for only the number of

months remaining in the eligibility period. The client is not eligible for a new 24 months eligibility period unless they have returned to the welfare rolls and reestablished their eligibility for TCC.

Parents receiving child care through this category are required to pay a portion of their child care cost through a client fee to the provider.

To receive child care through this category, the individual must:

- (1) Become employed within two years of losing FI stipend due to time limits.
- (2) Be working full-time or part-time (second parent may be permanently or temporarily disabled—verification required).
- (3) Have a need for child care for a child under age 13.
- (4) Be income-eligible based on current income standards.

### **03.55 Transitional Child Care – Full Family Sanction (TCC/FS)**

An FI BG member who becomes employed or increases earnings during a full family sanction and the earnings cause the BG to become ineligible for FI benefits may be eligible to receive child care services under TCC/FS. To request TCC/FS during the full family sanction, the FI case manager must verify new employment or increased earnings and complete a mini budget to determine if income exceeds the FI gross and/or net income limit. All available earned income disregards must be given to determine eligibility or ineligibility. If case is income ineligible for FI benefits, the FI case manager must make a referral to the SSS on the DSS 1269, Request for Support Services, indicate on the referral that the FI case benefits originally terminated due to full family sanction and that the individual is now employed or has had an increase in earnings. They must also attach a copy of the mini budget and CAP2 screen to the DSS 1269.

### **03.56 Child Protective Services (CPS)**

Funds are available to provide child care to a child's family to prevent further abuse or neglect or to provide a stable and consistent routine for a child to compensate for stressful experiences. To be funded, the child's parent or designated caretaker must agree to comply with the ABC Program rules and regulations and cooperate fully with the provider. Parents receiving child care through this category are required to pay a portion of their child care cost through a client fee to the provider. CPS eligibility categories are classified as either Protect In or Protect Out within the ABC Child Care Voucher System.

#### **03.56.01 Protect-In**

A case is considered to be a Protect-In case when the child continues to live in their own home.

Applications must be processed by the SSS, and the following eligibility criteria met:

- (1) The family must have an active child protective service case managed by a Human Service case manager.
- (2) The parent (head of household) is the applicant, and all the information on the application relates to the family.
- (3) The applicant does not have to meet the income guidelines or be working, in school or in training, because the service is provided in conjunction with protective services.
- (4) The Human Service case manager must provide information to the DSS child care staff to complete the application for the family. **The parent must sign the application.**
- (5) CPS clients must need the service for one of the following reasons:
  - a. To enable the child to remain in the home while the parent(s) pursues rehabilitation;

- b. To reduce the detrimental effects of abuse and neglect by providing the child with developmentally appropriate experiences in the areas of physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and language development.
- (6) The family must agree to pay the fee. The fee is based on family size and the Family's total gross income. If the family's income is above the Income Standards when the client enters the program, the fee is assessed on the maximum entrance income. At redetermination, the fee is assessed on the maximum exit income allowed for continued eligibility, unless the family's income is lower.
- (7) The family must comply with the ABC program attendance policies.
- (8) The child is under the age of 13.

**NOTE: Clients receiving assistance under this program can choose only licensed facilities or programs. The only exceptions is when the HS case manger has received prior authorization from State Office Program Staff. (SEE VERBIAGE)**

#### **03.56.02 Protect-Out**

A case is considered to be a Protect-Out case when the child is living in the home of a relative or designated caretaker.

Applications must be processed by the SSS, and the following eligibility criteria met:

- (1) The family must have an active child protective service case managed by a Human Service case manager.
- (4) The caretaker is the applicant, and all the information on the application relates to the caretaker.
- (5) The applicant does not have to meet the income guidelines or be working, in school or in training, because the service is provided in conjunction with protective services.
- (6) The Human Service case manager must provide information to the DSS child care staff to complete the application for the family. **The caretaker must sign the application.**
- (7) CPS clients must need the service for one of the following reasons:
  - a. To enable the child to remain in the home while the parent(s) pursues rehabilitation;
  - b. To reduce the detrimental effects of abuse and neglect by providing the child with developmentally appropriate experiences in the areas of physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and language development.
- (8) The family must agree to pay the fee. The fee is based on family size and the Family's total gross income. If the family's income is above the Income Standards when the client enters the program, the fee is assessed on the maximum entrance income. At redetermination, the fee is assessed on the maximum exit income allowed for continued eligibility, unless the family's income is lower.
- (9) The family must comply with the ABC program attendance policies.
- (10) The child is under the age of 13.

**NOTE: Clients receiving assistance under this program can choose only licensed facilities or programs. The only exceptions is when the HS case manger has received prior authorization from State Office Program Staff. (SEE VERBIAGE)**

### **03.57 Foster Care**

Funds are available to provide child care services to foster parents to allow the foster parents to continue to work, attend school or training. Applications are completed in the name of the foster child and signed by the foster parent on behalf of the foster child. Since foster parents are caring for the State's children, no fees are charged for foster children. Foster children whose cases are transferred to adoptions remain eligible for child care benefits until the adoptions are finalized by the court, as long as the foster parents (and/or adoptive parents) meet the eligibility criteria for the program. The information on the application relates to the foster child and the foster child's income.

If the foster child moves to another foster home, the funds reserved follow that child. However, all foster parents must meet the working, school or training requirements:

- (1) For entrance into the program, the child's monthly gross income shall not exceed 150% of poverty based on family size of one. The child may remain in the program, as long as the other eligibility criteria are met and the child's monthly gross income does not exceed 175% of poverty for a family of one.
- (2) The foster parents must need the service in order to work or to attend school or training.
- (3) Only the child's income is used in eligibility.
- (4) The child is under the age of 13.
- (5) The case is keyed using the child's name and ssn.

Note: If the child does not have a valid ssn, the SSS must use the child's birthdate to construct a temporary number. The following process must be used:

- 1) The first three positions of the temporary ssn should be zeros.
  - 2) The next two positions should be the child's month of birth.
  - 3) The last four positions should be the child's day and year of birth.
- Example: If the birthdate was 3/4/06, the temporary ssn would be 000-03-0406. In the instance of multiple births, such as twins or if another child has the same birthday, the first child is 000, the second is 001, and so forth.

NOTE: The SSS must monitor these temporary numbers and obtain the actual ssn as soon as possible. Upon receipt of the correct ssn, the SSS should key the information into the ABC Voucher System memo field.

NOTE: Clients receiving assistance under this program can choose only licensed facilities or programs. A foster parent who owns a licensed or registered family day care or group home cannot receive child care assistance to provide child care for their own foster child. Only a foster parent who owns a licensed child care center can receive assistance for providing care for their own foster child.

### **03.58 Child Care for Baby of a Foster Child**

Foster parents may receive child care assistance for the baby of a foster child. The foster parent must be employed, in school or in training and the foster child must be attending school or be employed in

conjunction with school attendance. The baby will be eligible as long as the mother (foster child) remains in foster care and the child resides in the care of the mother. The application should be keyed in the name of the foster child and all income information will be based on the foster child's income.

### **03.59 Non-Welfare Low-Income Families**

This eligibility category is used for eligible clients only if they do not meet the criteria for FI, TCC1, TCC2, or TCC24 child care assistance. If funding is available, individuals not eligible under the Welfare Reform program may be determined eligible under other funding sources (First Steps, Head Start, Criminal Domestic Violence, Family Literacy, etc) as long as the following criteria are met:

- (1) The applicant must need child care services in order to work or attend school or training. An exception may be made for families where one is working, in school or training and the other is disabled, or both are disabled, either permanently or temporarily.
- (2) The family's total gross income at the time of entrance into the program shall not exceed 150% of poverty based on family size. The family may stay in the program until their gross income exceeds 175% of poverty, provided they meet the other eligibility criteria.
- (3) Have a need for child care for a child(ren) under the age of 13.

### **03.60 Criminal Domestic Violence**

This eligibility category was designed to provide child care vouchers for women living in shelters to escape domestic violence situations or who are receiving services from a state-funded domestic violence program. Parents receiving child care for this category are required to pay a portion of their child care costs through a client fee to the child care provider. Funding for this category is for one year only.

To receive child care through this category, the individual must:

- 1) Be currently living in a domestic violence shelter or currently receiving services through a state funded domestic violence program.
- 2) Have a need for child care for a child under the age of 13.
- 3) Be working, in school, or in training and must need a minimum of 15 hours of child care per week.
- 4) The family's gross monthly income at the time of entrance into the program shall not exceed 150% of poverty based on family size.

### **03.61 Family Literacy**

This eligibility category is used to provide funding for parents that are actively seeking a high school diploma or GED.

To receive child care through this category, parent must:

- 1) Be actively seeking a high school diploma or GED.
- 2) Be participating in a family literacy program.
- 3) Need a minimum of 15 hours of child care per week.
- 4) Have a need for child care for a child under the age of 13.
- 5) If the parent has income, the gross monthly income shall not exceed 150% of poverty based on family size.
- 6) If an applicant is under the age of 18, there must be a signed statement of emancipation from the minors' parents. If the major parents will not sign a statement of emancipation, the application will have to be in the major parents name and their income, family size; etc; will be used for determining eligibility.

Note: Applicants that are seeking a college degree are not eligible to apply under Family Literacy.

## **04.00 PROVIDER INFORMATION**

### **04.10 Provider Types and Selection**

Providers are selected by individual clients after clients are determined eligible, funded, and notified that they may choose a provider. A client is given a wide range of child care options including center-based care; family day care homes; group day care homes; churches; synagogues; schools; employers; and care by relatives, neighbors, and friends. The client receives a list of enhanced providers with the eligibility notice. The client may choose a provider from the list or **any** provider willing to participate in the ABC Program. No payment can be made to out-of-state providers. Child care payments are made for full-time, half-time and less than half-time arrangements or combinations of the three types of care. The ABC Program Voucher System can accommodate a combination of one full-time and one less than half-time arrangement for the same week or a combination of one half-time and one less than half-time arrangement for the same week. A provider may receive payment for the same child, for the same week of care under different types of care arrangements. Less than half-time care arrangements are only available to Welfare Reform participants. All providers must complete certain documents which are required before they can be authorized to serve a child and receive reimbursement. The types of providers are Enhanced, Participating, and Self-Arranged and In-Home Child Care.

### **04.11 Accredited/Enhanced Providers**

Providers who meet standards higher than the minimum health and safety licensing requirements, have had an on-site visit by SCDSS Program Monitoring, and have completed the necessary documents to enroll with the ABC Program, may become enhanced providers. These providers:

- (1) Are paid higher rates
- (2) Eligible for Quality Incentive Bonuses (QI Bonus), which is an additional amount paid per week for providing a higher level of care.
- (3) Receive technical assistance from Program Monitoring staff
- (4) Can receive a 1 time general grant
- (5) Are placed on a county listing of child care providers that is given to potential and approved clients.

In order to be enrolled in the ABC Child Care Program as an accredited or Enhanced child care provider, the following steps are taken:

- (1) Interested providers contact the Control Center and indicate that they are interested in becoming enrolled in the ABC Child Care Voucher Program
- (2) Control Center staff complete the ABC Child Care Program Referral and Contact Form (APPENDIX ?) and mails a packet of information to the interested provider and sends a copy of the referral form to the appropriate Program Monitoring staff.
- (3) Upon receipt of the referral form, the Program monitor makes contact with the provider and sets up a visit.
- (4) During the review process, Program Monitoring completes the following forms and forwards the completed forms to the ABC Control Center:
  - a. Enhanced Provider Enrollment Form
  - b. Enhanced Provider Agreement
  - c. Enhanced Provider Rate Form

- d. The Form W-9
- e. Copy of the license or registration, if applicable.

Upon receipt of the completed enrollment packet, the Control Center takes the following actions:

- (1) The Form W-9 is sent to the Comptroller Generals office to be loaded in the vendor files.  
Note: The provider name, I.D, and SSN/FEIN must be identical in both the CG files and the ABC System in order for payments to be made to the child care provider.
- (2) Once loaded in the CG's files, the Control Center keys the provider information into the ABC Child Care Voucher System. At this point, the provider is eligible to begin serving children.
- (3) Sends the provider paperwork to be imaged.

#### **04.12 Participating Providers**

Those providers who are licensed or registered by DSS must complete the necessary documents to be accepted by the ABC Program. Those providers are participating for payments only, but agree to follow the Participating Provider Business Procedures and established policies and procedures of the ABC Child Care Program.

In order to be enrolled in the ABC Child Care Program as a Participating child care provider, the following steps are taken:

- (1) Interested providers contact the DSS Support Service Specialist (SSS) and indicate that they are interested in becoming enrolled in the ABC Child Care Voucher Program
- (2) A packet of information is sent to the child care provider or the SSS schedules an appointment for the child care provider to come into the office to complete the paperwork.
- (3) Upon receipt of the paperwork, the child care provider completes the following forms:
  - a. Participating Provider Enrollment Form
  - b. Participating Provider Agreement
  - c. Participating Provider Rate Form
  - d. Form W-9, IRS Form
  - e. Copy of the license or registration, if applicable.

Upon receipt of the completed enrollment packet from the child care provider, the SSS reviews the forms for accuracy and forwards the paperwork to the Control Center. Upon receipt of the completed paperwork, the Control Center does the following:

- (1) The Form W-9 is sent to the Comptroller Generals office to be loaded in the vendor files.  
Note: The provider name, I.D, and SSN/FEIN must be identical in both the CG files and the ABC System in order for payments to be made to the child care provider.
- (2) Once loaded in the CG's files, the Control Center keys the provider information into the ABC Child Care Voucher System. At this point, the provider is eligible to begin serving children.
- (3) Mails a copy of the Participating Provider Business Procedures
- (4) Sends the provider paperwork to be imaged.

#### **04.13 Self-Arranged Child Care Providers**

Child care provided in the home of relatives, neighbors, and friends is considered Self-Arranged Care (SAC) and the following applies:

- (1) The individual is exempt from being regulated by state or local laws until they care for children from at least two unrelated families. The must be related up to first cousins either by blood or law. At that point, they are no longer considered eligible to be Self-Arranged Care provider and must become licensed in order to continue to receiving payments for child care services  
NOTE: SCDSS will not pay significant others (spouses, boyfriend, girlfriend, life partner nor custodial parent) to care for the custodial parents child regardless of the significant others residence (in or out of the home).
- (2) The individual providing the care must be at least 21 years of age and be accepted in the ABC Program before they can be paid.
- (3) SAC providers must have access to a working telephone to make emergency calls when needed.
- (3) These providers are considered self employed and all child care payments are subject to federal and state income tax. (SEE IRS Requirements) It must be explained that such child care payments may be counted as earned income for the provider with regard to eligibility for other DSS/governmental programs. It is the responsibility of the SSS to inform FI/FS case manager of the providers income from child care payments.
- (4) The ABC Program authorizes services to eligible clients who choose a SAC provider.
- (5) Clients' requests for SAC for all funding sources are processed through the local DSS.

In order to become an SAC child care provider, the following must occur:

- (1) Contact the DSS SSS and indicate that they are interested in serving a child that is eligible for the ABC Child Care Program.
- (2) It is recommended that the SSS meet face-to-face with the potential SAC provider and the client to complete the appropriate paperwork and to show them the quality child care video, Come, Play With Me. If there is no face-to-face meeting, the paperwork will be mailed to the potential child care provider.
- (3) The following paperwork is needed for SAC providers:
  - a. SAC Certification (ABC FORM #, Appendix?)
  - b. SAC Provider Enrollment (ABC FORM #, Appendix ?)
  - c. SAC Provider Agreement (ABC FORM #, Appendix)
  - d. Form W-9 (Appendix?)
  - e. Picture Identification (South Carolina drivers license or identification card required). Note: No out of state picture identification will be accepted.
  - f. Copy of social security card for proof of social security number. Note: Acceptable forms of verification include a print out from the Social Security Administration or a copy of a voter's registration.

NOTE: The names on all forms of identification and social security cards must match.

Upon receipt of the completed enrollment packet from the child care provider, the SSS reviews the forms for accuracy and forwards the paperwork to the Control Center. Upon receipt of the completed paperwork, the Control Center does the following:

- (1) The Form W-9 is sent to the Comptroller Generals office to be loaded in the vendor files.

Note: The provider name, I.D, and SSN/FEIN must be identical in both the CG files and the ABC System in order for payments to be made to the child care provider.



- (2) Once loaded in the CG's files, the Control Center keys the provider information into the ABC Child Care Voucher System. At this point, the provider is eligible to begin serving children.
- (3) Mails a copy of the SAC Provider Business Procedures (APPENDIX ?)
- (4) Sends the provider paperwork to be imaged.

It is the responsibility of the SSS to counsel clients choosing SAC providers. DSS advises clients what to look for in SAC. DSS arranges for clients to view the Come, Play With Me video and helps clients understand that it is their responsibility to monitor their SAC arrangement. They explain the necessary forms and the payment procedures. Additionally, DSS ensures that there is a smoke detector and a fire extinguisher in the home of all SAC providers. When these basic health and safety requirements are not available, and the SAC provider does not have funds to purchase these, DSS tells them they may request grant funds for this purpose.

The use of SAC is mandated by the Amendments to the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1996. The federal regulations state that a parent eligible for child care assistance may choose SAC. Clients indicating an interest in SAC, and those who are undecided as to what type of care they will use, will be given the name, address and telephone number of the local DSS and the Parent Guide and Checklist for Self-Arranged Care.

The only situations where the state can support the denial of SAC arrangements are:

- (1) Any asterisked items on the SAC forms that are answered in the negative;
- (2) A founded and support allegation against a provider that is known to the public (e.g, a provider is involved in an active CPS case);
- (3) The SAC provider requested is the child's absent parent or the parent's significant other (spouse, girlfriend, boyfriend, life partner, etc) that resides either in or out of the home.
- (4) If a person who becomes an SAC provider (or potential provider) is found to have been terminated from the ABC Child Care Program for misrepresentation as an ABC client, he/she will not be approved as an SAC provider. The SSS must notify the potential provider that if the arrangement is denied, services rendered will not be paid.
- (5) If the SSS cannot validate the need for child care services, the arrangement will not be approved.
- (6) SAC arrangements cannot be approved for providers who is a member of the same FI benefit group as the parent.

#### **04.13.01 In-Home Child Care (IHC)**

An in-home child care arrangement is care that is provided in the child's own home by a relative or non-relative child care provider. In home care is affected by interaction with other laws and regulations. For example, in home providers that are NOT related to the child(ren) are classified as domestic service workers under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) (29-USC Section 206 (A) and are therefore covered under minimum wage. As employees IHC providers are also subject to tax requirements.

Based on these IRS Regulations, the use of IHC arrangements is limited when using IHC providers not related to the child(ren). These situation will only be approved when the client has three or more children in the home that require care.

IHC providers related to the child(ren) may be approved to provide care; however, the relationship must be verified by a client statement. If relationship status is questionable, the SSS will require verification

through birth certificates, marriage license, or other legal documents. The provider must be related to the child in one of the following ways: An aunt or uncle, first generation only, siblings who do not reside in the same household, grandparent or great grandparent.

Note: In-home child care providers must be at least 21 years old.

#### **4.14 Licensing/Registration Requirements**

State regulatory requirements mandate that child care centers and group day care homes be licensed and that family day care homes be licensed or registered. Child care centers and group day care homes owned and operated by a local church congregation or established religious denomination or religious college or university must be licensed in order to receive federal or state funds.

The DSS Licensing Division is contacted to report possible violation of the law any time staff believes reimbursement is being requested for more children than allowed under state regulatory law. Reimbursement is not authorized for child care arrangements that violate state or local law.

#### **4.20 Internal Revenue Requirements**

The ABC Program complies with Internal Revenue Services (IRS) regulations and completes forms, such as Form 1099, for payments made to providers that participate with the ABC Child Care Program. Covered, are any funds the ABC Program pays out to providers for child care. A form 1099 is sent to all child care providers who are paid \$600 or more during the tax year and a copy is sent to the IRS. Child care providers should contact the IRS for more information.

All child care provider, including SAC/IHC providers, are considered self-employed and are not employees of the State of South Carolina. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the child care provider to pay applicable taxes on all money earned.

#### **4.30 Provider Authorization/Connection**

When clients select an ABC Program provider and that provider confirms they wish to serve the client, the provider is authorized to serve the child. Both DSS and the Control Center authorize services. When DSS authorizes a provider to serve a child(ren), DSS should make arrangements over the phone or visit the site and follow-up with a letter to the provider. Subsequently, when the information is keyed into the memo field by the DSS worker, the Control Center confirms the authorization through a process known as “connecting the child(ren) to the provider” in the system. “Connections” for non-DSS clients may be made by pre-printed Connection Cards or Fax Forms. If providers serve clients outside the authorized period (start and stop dates), the client is responsible for the full cost of the service.

#### **4.40 Notifying Clients and Providers**

When a client is keyed into the ABC Voucher System database, an eligibility letter is sent to the client informing them of their eligibility. In addition to the letter of eligibility, the parent receives an eligibility packet that includes the following: Parent handbook, options sheet for choosing child care providers, holiday schedule, a copy of the client rights and responsibilities, connection card, earned income tax credit information, a brochure for choosing quality child care, and a listing of all enhanced child care providers.

Once the client has been connected to a particular child care provider, an Authorization/Connection letter is mailed to the client and the selected child care provider. The letter includes the authorization period (start and stop dates), the child(ren) to receive the service, the assessed fee, the type of care, and the number of weeks authorized. A client may receive more than one authorization letter if they change from one provider to another,

receive full-time service part of the year and half-time the remainder, or any combination of full-time, half-time or less than half-time services.

#### **4.50 Receipts for Grant Purchases**

Providers receiving grants from SCDSS must maintain receipts for items purchased under the grant.

#### **4.60 Retention Schedule**

All client and provider case file material such as letters, written communications, forms, agreements, etc., shall be maintained for a period of 3 years or until all applicable audits have been completed. If an audit is in progress, these shall be maintained until the audit is complete. Applications for applicants who are not funded shall be maintained for 12 months.

### **05.00 TRANSFERS FROM ONE PROVIDER TO ANOTHER**

**05.01** Clients may transfer from one provider to another, provided they contact the Control Center either by phone or in writing and receive approval prior to the transfer. The effective date of transfer is the first Monday following the seventh working day after the day the Control Center receives the phone call or receives the written notice. State holidays and weekends are not considered work days in counting the seven days.

**NOTE: Exceptions to this policy may be granted by the Control Center supervisor when extenuating circumstances exist.**

#### **05.02 Notifying Clients and Providers of Transfers**

When clients are approved to transfer, the previous provider will be notified of the client's last authorized day of service (always a Sunday) via a transfer letter. The transfer letter will be sent to the client and the provider from which the client is transferring. The client is instructed at the time they call for a transfer that in order for services to be authorized from a new child care provider, that the ABC Control Center must receive a connection card in advance of the client starting the new child care provider. If the new provider begins serving the client before the effective date of transfer, the client is responsible for the full cost of the services prior to authorization.

#### **05.30 Child Protective Services and Foster Care Transfers**

Children funded under Child Protective services or Foster Care will not be allowed to transfer from one provider to another without the express consent and/or permission of the local DSS Human Services Case Manager. This must be communicated to the Control Center via the local county DSS Support Services Specialist. Because of the sensitive nature of the CPS/Foster care cases, transfers without notice may be granted when extenuating circumstances exist.

Eligibility must be redetermined a minimum of once every 12 months, and more often if income or family size increases within the eligibility period. Annually, before eligibility is redetermined, the application must be updated, the client must sign the application and verification must be obtained. The requirements for redetermination are the same as for the initial eligibility. The new eligibility period will be additional 12-month period.

#### **Changes Within the Eligibility Period**

Clients are required to report all changes within their family household within ten calendar days after the change occurs. Not all changes require a redetermination of eligibility. However, when the change

causes the client to change from one eligibility source to another, or causes an increase in the client fee, a new application is required and a redetermination is necessary. This includes clients who were initially determined eligible for half-time care only; however, changes in employment necessitate full-time care. Changes from half time to full time or full time to half time will only be effective the Monday after the change has been requested forward.

Changes in address, telephone numbers or income that do not increase the client fee will not require a new application but the changes should be made in the ABC Voucher System and documented in the memo field. If the change causes the client to be ineligible, services are terminated the first Sunday following the 10 working day after the Control Center is notified.

In those instances where eligibility is being redetermined and a new application is needed, if the child is eligible for continued care under their applicable funding source, up to 52 weeks of care will given. If the change occurs and the child is not eligible for an additional 52 weeks under the current funding source, only the remaining unit in the current eligibility period will be available in the client's new eligibility period.

## **06.00 TERMINATION OF SERVICES**

### **06.10 Reasons for Termination**

Services are terminated when a client or child is no longer eligible to receive ABC child care services or no longer wants the service. This may come at any time during the eligibility period. When the client becomes ineligible, the entire family becomes ineligible and services are terminated. When a child becomes ineligible for reasons such as reaching age 13, or exceeding the allowable absences, services are terminated for that child only. Reasons for terminations include, but are not limited to:

- (1) The client/child is no longer eligible. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:
  - a. client/child does not meet specific eligibility criteria or requirements;
  - b. client's income exceeds Income Standards;
  - c. child reaches age 13;
  - d. child does not live with client;
- (2) The client intentionally submits false information.
- (3) The client moves out of state.
- (4) The child exceeds allowable absences.
- (5) The client/child no longer needs services.

**Note:** In situations where client's are terminated from a particular child care provider for not following a facilities policy, does not constitute a termination from the ABC Program.

When the ABC Control Center is notified that a client and/or recipient needs to be terminated, the following procedure is followed:

On the date that a termination of a client or recipient is determined necessary, start counting 10 working days (excluding weekends and holidays), with day one being the next day. The effective date of termination will be the first Monday following the 10<sup>th</sup> working day from the date of determination.

Terminations within the ABC Child Care Voucher System will not be backdated. If a request is made for termination that has not followed the 10 working day notice rule, Control Center staff will change the effective date to reflect the 10 working day notice.

Clients who are terminated for excessive absences will not be approved for child care services for six months from the effective date of termination.

**If the client is currently funded Family Independence, Protective Services, or Foster Care at the time of termination, DSS may request services again for that client prior to the end of the 6 months period. The records of clients whose services are reinstated by DSS will continue to reflect all absences accrued during the current eligibility period.**

For Welfare Reform (WR) clients, recommendations for termination or reinstatement of services will be coordinated between the SSS and the Control Center. When WR clients have exceeded the allowed number of absences, the Control Center staff will initiate the termination of services to the child, or the entire family as deemed appropriate. This will also include children who are funded under the Child Protective Services or Foster Care set-aside. The Control Center staff will inform the appropriate Supportive Services Specialist (SSS) in the county DSS offices the day the determination is made.

#### **06.20 Termination of Client and Provider**

When a decision to terminate a client/child is reached by the Control Center, the client and provider will be mailed a Denial/Termination Letter that reflects the effective date of termination. The termination notice is intended to give the client time to make other arrangements outside of the ABC Program, to give program staff adequate time to process the paperwork, and to allow timely notification to the client and provider of the termination before the effective date of termination. The effective date of termination is the first Monday following the 10<sup>th</sup> working day from the date of determination. (Holidays and weekends are not considered work days.)

#### **06.30 SSS Responsibilities for Termination**

DSS makes termination decisions for all Family Independence (FI) and Child Protective Services or Foster Care clients; however, terminations due to excessive absences for all FI, Child Protective Service and Foster Care clients will be initiated and processed by the Control Center. The DSS worker will communicate termination requests through the memo field in the ABC Child Care System to the Control Center staff. The effective date of termination will be the first Monday following the 10<sup>th</sup> working day from the date of determination.

### **07.00 PAYMENT INFORMATION**

#### **07.10 Payment Information**

The Service Voucher Log (SVL) is the billing mechanism for the ABC Program. It should be completed by the child care provider and returned promptly after receipt to ensure timely payment. After the first SVL is generated, the provider receives another each time a check for reimbursement is mailed. SVL's will continue to generate as long as the provider has active connections which have not been paid.

Prior to serving the first ABC Program child, the provider must be enrolled in the ABC Program. The provider must also submit a connection card or fax to the Control Center or DSS must notify the Control Center of the start/stop dates for a child so the connection can be made.

#### **07.10 Requests for Payment**

Requests for payment will be honored only after the provider has been authorized to serve the child. Each authorization gives the dates within which a provider may bill. It is the provider's responsibility to maintain this

information and bill for eligible weeks only. If a child misses a week due to vacation, or illness, the provider may bill for the week, but must report those absences on the SVL. If the provider closes for a week or longer (summer, etc.), the provider must notify the Control Center at least one month in advance, and **must not** bill for that period unless private pay parents are charged as well. Providers are not to bill for children who have missed 10 consecutive days. If the child does not return on the 11<sup>th</sup> day, Control Center staff will end the connection on the Sunday following the 10 consecutive absences. The Control Center staff will call the provider to inform them of the end of service date, since no written notice will be sent by the ABC Child Care Program. The provider can notify the Control Center by making a note on their SVL, calling the provider line, or by sending a letter to the Control Center to the attention of the provider team.

**Note: Completing SVL's correctly the first time will ensure payment within 10-14 working days after receipt of the information.**

### **07.20 Generating/Completing the SVL**

Prior to serving the first ABC Program child, the provider must be enrolled in the ABC Program. The provider must also submit a connection card or fax to the Control Center.

### **07.30 Hand-Delivered SVL's**

Providers may hand-deliver the signed SVL to the drop box located at state office DSS at the security desk. Child Care Expenditures staff pick-up from the drop box each day. All hand delivered SVL's are processed with all other payments. Delivering the SVL to the drop box does not guarantee

### **07.40 Payment Instructions**

Payment is expected to take from 10 to 14 working days from receipt of the signed SVL or voucher. Providers are asked and expected to wait until the 14<sup>th</sup> working day before calling about reimbursement. The provider is mailed the check for services delivered along with the applicable Remittance Advices, the next SVL, if appropriate, and a return self-addressed postage paid envelope.

- (1) Providers receive a Provider Remittance Advice with each reimbursement check received.
- (2) The Provider Remittance Advice identifies the client, child, and payment amount for each transaction making up the check total.
- (3) Providers are expected to match the Remittance Advice against the provider's copy of the SVL to ensure proper payment for each transaction.
- (4) The Remittance Advice also identifies the children who were not paid and the reason.
- (5) The provider may call the Control Center (1-800-262-4416) with any questions regarding payment problems, and/or questions about transactions that did not process.

### **07.50 Provider Check Pick-Up**

Providers are allowed to pickup reimbursement checks for the following reasons:

- (1) Failure to process payment within 14 working days, i.e., Monday through Friday (including holiday) from receipt.
- (2) Failure of the SVL to print because of system problem(s).
- (3) Failure or delay in system input by DSS, Control Center or Fiscal.
- (4) When the 14<sup>th</sup> day is a Friday or the day before an agency holiday.
- (5) When extenuating circumstances are present, as determined by Child Care Department staff.

### **07.60 Provider Adjustments**

Provider payments will be adjusted when necessary to correct errors made by the payment agency or the service agency.

#### 1.1.1 08.00 REMEDIAL ACTIONS

##### **08.10 Client Complaints**

During intake, applicants are informed that they may, make complaints related to child care provided through the ABC Program by calling 1-800-763-2223. Clients are encouraged to report concerns or complaints about the following:

- (1) providers whom they suspect of violating minimum licensing standards; and
- (2) providers whom they suspect are not providing quality child care, as defined by ABC Program Standards;

When calls are received, they are logged in and maintained. Substantiated complaints are made available to the public upon request. If the complaint is found to be unsubstantiated, no further action is required. Substantiated complaints are placed in the provider's permanent file maintained by Program Monitoring. Substantiated complaints resulting in provider terminations from the ABC Program are forwarded to the Control Center for necessary action.

Program Monitoring staff in Columbia answers the complaint line and encourages clients to notify DSS, Division of Child Care Licensing when providers are suspected of violating minimum licensing standards. Program Monitoring also follow up with DSS Licensing and notifies the Control Center when a provider's license has been suspended or revoked. Providers will be removed from the enhanced provider list and the vendor agreement will be terminated, suspended, or denied if a provider is not in good standing with DSS Licensing.

Program Monitoring determines appropriate action after complaints are investigated. Investigations may include unannounced on-site visits.

##### **08.20 Reports of Abuse or Neglect**

State law requires providers to immediately report suspected child abuse or neglect to DSS, Department of Child Protective and Preventive Services or local law enforcement. Child care providers must also notify other staff as follows when they have been reported for suspected child abuse or neglect:

- Enhanced Providers – report to Program Monitoring
- Participating providers – report to DSS
- SAC Providers – report to DSS

Clients who suspect child abuse or neglect will be directed to contact the DSS Department of Child Protective and Preventive Services in their county.

##### **08.30 The Client Appeal**

The applicant/client is given an opportunity to request a fair hearing in compliance with the Civil Rights Act of 1964. They may appeal any decision that results in the denial or termination of services, provided that decision is not based solely on lack of available funds. **Client appeal hearings are held by the agency that makes the decision that the client is appealing.**

A fair hearing must be requested in writing. The request may be made by the client/applicant or a person acting on their behalf, such as a legal representative, a relative, or a friend. Staff must not impede, limit, or interfere in any way with the client's right to request a fair hearing. Staff must follow the appeal

procedures as outlined in the documents, Appeals and Hearing process-DHHS and/or Appeals and Hearing Process-DSS.

During an appeal process, clients receiving child care services are responsible for the cost of the child care services. Child care services will resume if the decision is in favor of the client.

#### **9.40 Misuse of Services**

The client must report and verify changes in income, family size, address, employment/educational training status and change in hours of employment/training/education, assistance grant or other circumstances that affect eligibility within 10 calendar days of the change. The client is subject to termination of child care assistance and/or prosecution if the client willfully fails to report any changes and continues to receive services for which he/she is not eligible.

Any individual who provides incorrect information or misrepresents the facts for the purpose of obtaining or attempting to obtain child care services from the ABC Program will be subject to sanctions administered by the DHHS.

#### **9.41 Determination of Misuse**

During the application process, the client is informed that it is his/her responsibility to provide correct information when the application is completed. Additionally, the client is given a copy of the Applicant Rights and Responsibilities that emphasizes the need for accurate information. Further, the service application includes a statement which must be signed by the client. In signing this statement, the client declares that the information contained within the application is true to the best of his/her knowledge. The information provided by the client is the basis for determining client intent of misuse of services.

#### **9.42 Reporting/Investigating Misuse**

When circumstances exist that cause a provider to suspect an ineligible client is being served, it should be reported to the Control Center at 1-800-262-4416.

#### **9.43 Sanctions**

The DHHS will review each case of suspected misuse and, based on the facts in the case, decide one of the following:

- Services to the client will be continued.
- A sanction will be applied.
- The case will be referred for legal action.

The client will be notified of the decision. Clients determined to have misused or intended to misuse services may or may not be eligible for services after the sanction has been satisfied. Redetermination will not be considered for six months from the date of termination.

The DHHS may also invoke one or all of the following administrative sanctions against any client who has been determined to have obtained or intended to obtain services by submitting false or misleading information:

- Repayment of benefits based on the actual cost of services;
- Termination of services;
- No consideration for reentry into the ABC Program (Exception: DSS FI clients).

#### **9.44 Fair Hearings**



Any individual notified of a proposed sanction may request a fair hearing according to S.C. Regulations 126-150 et.seq., (S.C. Code, 1976 as amended) prior to the implementation of the sanction. An client requesting a fair hearing should contact the agency that made the decision they are appealing.

This may be the Division of Appeals and Hearings at the DHHS, or the Individual and Provider Rights Division at DSS.

**9.45 Legal Action**

The above remedies are in addition to any civil or criminal actions that may be available to SCDSS.

**ATTACHMENT 3.2A**  
**PAYMENT RATES**

**Information not available at this time**

**ATTACHMENT 3.2B**  
**MARKET RATE SURVEY INSTRUMENT AND SUMMARY**

**Statewide Child Care Market Rate Survey**

**Data Collection and Analysis Report**

As part of the process for determining the rates or prices that providers charge for child care, the South Carolina Department of Social Services (SCDSS) is required to conduct market rate surveys at least once every two years and to use these survey results to inform subsidy payment structures. For the 2007 market rate survey, SCDSS contracted with the University of South Carolina's Institute for Public Service and Policy Research to conduct the data collection and data processing. This report provides a summary of these data collection efforts.

**Sampling**

SCDSS provided IPSPR with a listing of child care providers in the state. This list of providers was divided into 11 strata from which the sample was to be selected. Table 1 provides these 11 strata, the total number of providers in each, and the number to be included in the sample. For each strata in which there were 275 or more child care providers, all providers were included in the study; for those strata with more than 275 providers, a random sample of 250 cases were selected for inclusion in the sample. A total of 1,774 providers were selected for this study.

An initial mailing, consisting of a cover letter, questionnaire, and postage paid return envelope was sent to these providers on January 19<sup>th</sup>. Those who had not responded by February 8<sup>th</sup> were sent a second mailing that included a slightly different cover letter, the questionnaire, and a postage-paid return envelope. (A copy of the initial cover letter, the questionnaire, and the follow-up cover letter are provided in the Appendix.).

TABLE 1  
SCDSS TYPES OF PROVIDERS, NUMBER IN EACH STRATA, AND NUMBER TO BE INCLUDED IN  
THE INITIAL SAMPLE

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Number to be sampled</u>
Urban Centers – Licensed	887	250
Urban Group Homes – Licensed	180	180
Urban Family Homes – Licensed	16	16
Urban Centers – Registered (Faith-based)	207	207
Urban Family Homes – Registered	1137	250
Rural Centers – Licensed	264	264
Rural Group Homes – Licensed	91	91
Rural Family Homes – Licensed	4	4
Rural Centers – Registered (Faith-based)	61	61
Rural Family Homes – Registered	512	250
ABC Exempt/Waivered (non-Head Start)	201	201
Total	3560	1774

Beginning on February 26<sup>th</sup>, those facilities who had not responded to the mail survey were called by members of the interviewing the IPSPR's interviewing staff. Prior to making these calls, the interviewers received specialized training for this survey. The interviewing was conducted from the Institute's computer-aided telephone interviewing facilities on the University of South Carolina Columbia campus. Many of the interviews were monitored to insure that instructions were being followed. Calls were made from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM Monday through Friday. The final interviews were conducted on March 21<sup>st</sup>.

Of the child care facilities that were included in the initial sample, 36 indicated that they were no longer providing child care services. Of the remainder, 1,353 either returned a completed questionnaire or provided the information in a telephone interview, for an overall response rate of 78%. The number of completed surveys and the response rate for each stratum are presented in Table 2.<sup>1</sup>

The principal question of interest asked these facilities to provide the weekly rates they charge for full-time (30 or more hours per week) and half-time (15 – 29 hours per week) care for children in various age groups: 0 through 12 months; 13 through 24 months; 25 through 36 months; 3 to 4 years; 4 to 5 years; 5 to 6 years; 6 to 13 years; and 13 to 19 years special needs children. While the questionnaire asked for weekly rates to be provided, not all respondents did so, particularly in the mail survey. For example, some respondents provided a monthly rate, while others provided an hourly rate, or tuition for an entire year. In those cases where a monthly rate was provided, a weekly rate was calculated by dividing the monthly rate by 4.333. In those cases where an hourly rate was provided, a weekly full-time rate was calculated by multiplying the hourly rate

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<sup>1</sup> An additional 19 completed surveys were received after the data had been processed for analysis.

TABLE 2  
NUMBER SAMPLED AND RESPONSE RATE, BY STRATA

	<u>Sampled</u>	<u>No Longer Provider</u>	<u>Completed</u>	<u>%</u>
Urban Centers – Licensed	250	5	211	86.1
Urban Group Homes – Licensed	180	1	144	80.4
Urban Family Homes – Licensed	16	1	11	73.3
Urban Centers – Registered (Faith-based)	207	0	185	89.4
Urban Family Homes – Registered	250	7	170	70.0
Rural Centers – Licensed	264	10	213	83.9
Rural Group Homes – Licensed	91	3	70	79.5
Rural Family Homes – Licensed	4	0	4	100.0
Rural Centers – Registered (Faith-based)	61	1	55	91.7
Rural Family Homes – Registered	250	3	164	66.4
ABC Exempt/Waivered (non-Head Start)	201	5	126	64.3
Total	1774	36	1353	78.0

by 30 and the half-time weekly rate was calculated by multiplying the hourly rate by 22. If an annual rate was given, this number was divided by 52 to produce a weekly rate. Similarly, if a nine-month or school year rate was provided, this was divided by 39 to produce the weekly rate and if a ten month rate were given, it was divided by 43. Through this process, the rates for each facility in each of the requested age groups were standardized as rates per week.

This full-time and part-time weekly child care rate information was then used to compile the minimum, 50<sup>th</sup>, 75<sup>th</sup>, 80<sup>th</sup>, 85<sup>th</sup>, 90<sup>th</sup>, 95<sup>th</sup> and 100<sup>th</sup> percentile rates for children ages 0 through 2, three through five, and six through twelve for the following types of facilities:

- (1) ABC Accredited Child Care Centers
- (2) ABC Enhanced Child Care Centers
- (3) ABC Participating Child Care Centers
- (4) ABC Exempt/Waivered Child Care Centers
- (5) Non-ABC Accredited Child Care Centers.
- (6) Non-ABC Licensed Child Care Centers
- (7) Non-ABC Faith-Based Registered Child Care Centers
- (8) All Child Care Centers
- (9) ABC Enhanced Group Child Care Homes
- (10) ABC Participating Group Child Care Homes
- (11) Non-ABC Licensed Group Child Care Homes
- (12) All Group Child Care Homes
- (13) ABC Enhanced Family Child Care Homes
- (14) ABC Participating Family Child Care Homes
- (15) Non-ABC Licensed Family Child Care Homes
- (16) Non-ABC Registered Family Child Care Homes
- (17) All Family Child Care Homes
- (18) All Child Care Facilities

Two methods were used in analyzing these data. In the first, all facilities were treated equally in computing each of the percentiles. In the second, the facilities were weighted according to the number of children in each age group that attended the facility, so that the rates charged by facilities with larger number of children in a particular age group are given greater weight in the second analysis.

**APPENDIX**  
**QUESTIONNAIRE AND COVER LETTERS**



**[INITIAL MAILING COVER LETTER]**

January 19, 2007

Dear \_\_\_\_\_ :

In order to determine the rates the ABC Program pays child care providers, the South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS) is required to survey all providers every two years. To fulfill this requirement, DSS is working with the University of South Carolina's Institute for Public Service and Policy Research to conduct a survey of the child care providers in the state. I would appreciate your assistance with this survey.

The information you provide will ensure that state policy makers hear directly from you about your current child care rates and enable us to reimburse providers who care for the many low income children served in the ABC Child Care Voucher Program based on current market rates.

The information you provide is completely confidential. It will be compiled with data from other responding programs without any identifying information, and will be reported only in summary form in which no individual program will be identified.

I would appreciate it if you would complete this questionnaire and return it to the USC Institute for Public Service and Policy Research in the envelope provided by February 5, 2007. If you have questions or need additional information, please call Libby Chapman at 1-803-898-2734 or 1-800-262-4416.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Leigh Bolick, Program Director  
Child Care Services

LWB/c

## South Carolina Department of Social Services Market Rate Survey of Child Care Providers

Name of Child Care Provider/Facility:			
License #/Registration #: (Write 'NA' if exempt.)			
Facility FEIN#/Social Security #:			
Name of Director:			
Provider/Facility Street Address:			
County	City	State	Zip
Phone:		Fax:	
Email:			

Please check the box that describes your child care program/facility (check only one).

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Licensed Center                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Licensed Group Home    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Licensed Church Center                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Licensed Family Home   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Registered Church Center               | <input type="checkbox"/> Registered Family Home |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exempt from licensing and registration |   |

If your facility is a center, is it accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)?

- |                              |                             |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|

If you provide child care in your home, is it accredited by the National Association of Family Child Care?

- |                              |                             |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|

How many children are enrolled in your child care facility/program? \_\_\_\_\_

Is this your usual daily attendance?

- |                              |                             |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|

If no, what is your usual daily attendance? \_\_\_\_\_

Is your child care program/facility part of the ABC Child Care Voucher Program?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know

**If yes, please check the box below that describes the type of ABC child care program:**

- ☐ ABC Participating Provider-Level 1 (You meet basic regulatory requirements.)
- ☐ ABC Enhanced Provider-Level 2 (You meet ABC Child Care Program standards that are higher than basic regulatory requirements.)
- ☐ ABC Accredited Provider-Level 3 (You are accredited.)

**How many of your enrolled children have an ABC voucher?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Number of Children Enrolled, by Age**

Age of Children	Total	Age of Children	Total
0 through 12 Months		5 to 6 Years	
13 through 24 Months		6 to 10 Years	
25 through 36 Months		10 to 13 Years	
3 to 4 Years		13 to 19 Years – special needs children	
4 to 5 Years			

**Child Care Rates – Weekly**

Age of Children	Regular Rate – Weekly	
	Full Time 30 or more hours/week	Half Time 15-29 hours/week
0 through 12 Months		
13 through 24 Months		
25 through 36 Months		
3 to 4 Years		
4 to 5 Years		
5 to 6 Years		
6 to 13 Years		
13 to 19 Years – special needs children		

*Hours of Operation*

**Start Time:** \_\_\_\_\_ **AM/PM**      **End Time:** \_\_\_\_\_ **AM/PM**

*Days of Operation (check all that apply)*

☐ *Monday* ☐ *Tuesday* ☐ *Wednesday* ☐ *Thursday* ☐ *Friday* ☐ *Saturday* ☐ *Sunday*

*Time of Year Operation*

☐ *Full year* ☐ *School year only* ☐ *Summer only*

***Thank you for your participation in this survey. Please return the completed questionnaire in the envelope provided. If you have comments or questions, please call Libby Chapman at 1-803-898-2734 or 1-800-262-4416.***

**[FOLLOW-UP LETTER]**

February 8, 2007

A couple of weeks ago, we sent you a questionnaire concerning the rates or prices providers charge for child care in South Carolina. If you have already completed and returned this questionnaire, please accept our sincere thanks. If you have not yet had a chance to complete this questionnaire, we would appreciate it if you would do so and return it by February 22.

The information being collected in this study will ensure that state policy makers hear directly from child care providers about the current cost of providing care, help provide care for many low income children while their parents work, and enable providers who care for these children to be reimbursed at current market rates. In order to for the results to be most reliable, it is important that we receive responses from as many providers as possible, and I appreciate your assistance with this study.

If you did not receive a questionnaire, or if it was misplaced, please call the Institute for Public Service and Policy Research toll-free at 1-800-476-3803 and another one will be mailed to you. If you have other questions about this study or need additional information, please call Libby Chapman of the Department of Social Services at 1-803-898-2734 or 1-800-262-4416.

Thank you again for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Leigh Bolick, Program Director  
Child Care Services

## ATTACHMENT 3.3.2 INCOME ELIGIBILITY

### Income Definition

For eligibility purposes, gross family income is defined as the source and amount of current gross income earned by all adult family members through the receipt of wages, tips, salaries, and/or commissions, piece-rate payments, cash bonuses earned, and armed services pay, including uniform and living allowances.

The family's gross monthly income is calculated by adding the monthly income of each adult family member. Income such as child support payments or Social Security benefits for children under age 18 should also be included. Family members living temporarily away from home must be included in the family size and their income included in the calculation.

For applicants who receive wages weekly, the weekly salary is multiplied by 4.33 to arrive at the gross monthly income. For applicants who receive wages every other week, the salary is multiplied by 2.16. Seasonal income, income received on a quarterly basis, or irregular income must be averaged.

### Income Inclusions

The following types of income are to be considered when computing the amount of gross family income for eligibility purposes:

- **Family Independence Stipend-** This is an assistance payment to aid families with dependent children who are in the financial assistance budget. The client's current Medicaid card or contract with Economic Services may be used to verify FI stipend eligibility.
- **Alimony-** This is an allowance, usually ordered by the Family Court, paid to an individual by the spouse or former spouse after a legal separation or divorce or while legal action is pending. This may be verified through the court or, if paid voluntarily, by the person making payments.
- **Child Support-** This is an allowance, usually ordered by the Family Court, for the support of a child or children. This may be verified through the court or, if paid voluntarily, by the person making payments.
- **Social Security-** This includes Social Security pensions, survivor's benefits, and permanent disability insurance benefits paid by the Social Security Administration before deductions for medical insurance.
- **Railroad Retirement-** Railroad retirement insurance benefits from the U.S. Government are also included.
- **Veterans' Pensions-** This includes money paid periodically by the Veterans Administration to disabled members of the armed forces or to survivors of deceased veterans, as well as subsistence paid to veterans for education and on-the-job training, and "refunds" paid to veterans as G.I. insurance premiums.
- **Pensions and Annuities-** This includes pensions or retirement benefits paid to a retired person or his or her survivors by a former employer or by a union, either directly or through an insurance company.
- **Unemployment Compensation-** Compensation received from government unemployment insurance agencies or private companies during periods of unemployment. This also includes any strike benefits received from union funds. The unemployed individual should receive an initial letter of entitlement to unemployment benefits issued by the South Carolina Employment Security Commission. The length of time the person expects to receive benefits should be noted in the narrative as well as the reason for termination of employment.
- **Workmen's Compensation-** Compensation received periodically from private or public insurance companies for injuries incurred at work. The employer and not the individual must have paid the cost of this insurance. The length of time the individual is expected to be out of work due to injury should be included in the narrative.

- **Wages or Salary** (Includes seasonal work/income)- Total money received for work performed as an employee, including wages, salary, commissions, tips, piece-rate payments, cash bonuses earned, and armed forces pay, including uniform and living allowances. This is to be the gross amount before deductions are made for taxes, bonds, pensions, insurance, union dues, and similar purposes. The best form of verification is an employer's written statement of income. Other methods of verification follow:
  - (1) Pay stubs for the last full month or the longest current time available;
  - (2) Pay envelopes for the last full month or the longest current time available;
  - (3) Last W-2 Form or Income Tax Form;
  - (4) Written statement from the employer;
  - (5) Military Leave Earning Statement (LES).
- **Non-Farm Self-Employment**- Adjusted gross income or net income earned in self-employment in one's own business, professional enterprise, or partnership. Net income means gross receipts minus expenses. Gross receipts are the value of all goods sold and services rendered. Expenses include the following:
  - (1) Cost of goods purchased;
  - (2) Rent, heat, light/power;
  - (3) Depreciation charged;
  - (4) Wages and salaries paid;
  - (5) Business taxes (not personal income tax);
  - (6) Similar costs.

The most recent income tax return is the best method of verification. If a return is not available, copies of receipts of purchase, records of sale, or any other records or statements of expenses and profits should be used.

- **Farm Self-Employment**- Gross receipts minus expenses from the operation of a farm by a person on his own account as an owner, renter, or sharecropper. Gross receipts include the following:
  - (1) Value of all products sold;
  - (2) Government crop loans;
  - (3) Monies received under Agricultural Stabilization Act;
  - (4) Monies received from the rental of farm equipment to others;
  - (5) Incidental receipts from the sale of wood, sand, gravel, and similar items.

Operation expenses include the following:

- (1) Cost of feed, fertilizer, seed, and other farming supplies;
- (2) Cash wages paid to farm hands;
- (3) Depreciation charges;
- (4) Cash rent;
- (5) Interest on farm mortgages;
- (6) Farm building repairs;
- (7) Farm taxes (not state and federal income taxes).

The value of food, fuel, or other farm products used for family living is not included as part of net income. The most recent income tax return is the best source of verification. If a return was not filed or is unavailable, copies of receipts of purchase, records of sale, or any other records or statements of expenses and profits should be used to determine net income. Farm income is usually available only at the end of the crop year, but may be prorated over the next 12 months.

- **Dividends from Stocks and/or Bonds**- Benefits received by a person who holds shares of stock (interest in a company) or bonds (interest bearing certificates), or benefits received from profits of an insurance company with whom he/she has a policy, or as a result of his/her membership in an association that shares its profits with its members. The amount received may be documented by placing a copy of the individual's dividend statement in the record.
- **Interest on Savings or Bonds**- Benefits accrued as a result of a savings account or bonds. This includes all such income whether paid directly or reinvested in the savings account or bonds.

- **Income from Estates or Trusts-** Periodic receipts from estates or trust funds. This may be verified through probate court or the institution handling the trust fund.
- **Net Rental Income-** Income from the rental of a house, store, or other property, minus expenses necessary to the upkeep of the rental property. Copies of rent receipts and expense records placed in the file may verify this amount. Further verification should be obtained from those persons paying a rental fee to assure accuracy.
- **Income from Boarders/Lodgers-** Income from boarders/lodgers minus expenses necessary to provide room and/or board. This may be verified in the same manner as net rental income.
- **Net Royalties-** This includes the following:
  - (1) The share of proceeds paid to the applicant as owner of a right (for example, a patent) for permission to use it or operate it;
  - (2) The share of proceeds paid to one from whom land rich in oil or minerals is leased;
  - (3) The share, usually a specified percentage, or proceeds from the work of a composer or writer and paid to the individual.This amount should be verified by placing a copy of the royalty contract in the record.
- **General Assistance-** This is a state-funded assistance payment to the totally and temporarily disabled. This may be verified by checking the assistance payments case record.

### **Income Exclusions**

The following types of income are **not** to be considered when computing the amount of gross income for eligibility purposes:

- **Supplemental Security Income (SSI)-** This refers to Supplemental Security Income issued through the Social Security Administration and the Optional Supplement issued by the Department of Social Services.
- **Funds Connected with Judgments of Indian Claims-** These are per capita payments or funds held in trust for any individual in satisfaction of a judgment of the Indian Claims Commission or the United States Court of Claims.
- **Income from Property Sold-** Money received from the sale of property (such as stocks, bonds, a house, or a car) is to be disregarded unless such individual was engaged in the business of selling such property.
- **Supplemental and Special Food Programs-** Exclude the value of supplemental food assistance under the National School Lunch Act, as amended.
- **Payment from Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970**
- **Children's Earnings-** No inquiry shall be made regarding the earned income of a dependent child under 18 years of age.
- **Certain Loans and Grants-** Disregard income from loans and grants, such as scholarships, obtained and used under conditions that preclude their use for current living costs. Also, disregard any loans or grants to any undergraduate student for educational purposes made or issued under any program administered by the Commissioner of Education under the Higher Education Act (e.g., Pell or Carl Perkins grants).
- **Home Produce-** Disregard the value of home produce used for household consumption.
- **Value of Meals Received Through Special Programs-** The value of meals received through congregate dining programs, etc., is excluded regardless of funding source for such programs.
- **Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) Income-** The income received by volunteers under the VISTA program must be disregarded.
- **Foster Care Board Payments-** These payments, including clothing allowances, are excluded from the income of both foster parents and foster children.
- **Earnings Received Under Job Training Partnership Act of 1983**
- **Special Service Supplemental Benefits for Adoption**
- **Lump Sum Payments from Social Security, Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Housing and Urban Development (HUD).**



- **Bank Withdrawals**
- **Borrowed Money**
- **Tax Refunds (to include payment or refunds from Earned Income Tax Credit or Dependent Care Credits.)**
- **Gifts**
- **Lump Sum Inheritances or Lump Sum Insurance Payments**
- **Capital Gains**
- **Value of Food Stamp Allotment**
- **Income from Work-Study Programs**
- **United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Donated Food Value.**

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**ATTACHMENT 3.5.1**  
**ABC CHILD CARE PROGRAM**  
**OCTOBER 1, 2007 – SEPTEMBER 30, 2008**  
**CHILD DEVELOPMENT FEE SCALE**

FAMILY SIZE	MONTHLY INCOME	CLIENT FEE	FAMILY SIZE	MONTHLY INCOME	CLIENT FEE	FAMILY SIZE	MONTHLY INCOME	CLIENT FEE	FAMILY SIZE	MONTHLY INCOME	CLIENT FEE
1	\$ 0 - 426	\$6.00	5	\$ 0 - 1,006	\$ 6.00	9	\$ 0 - 1,586	\$ 6.00	13	\$ 0 - 2,166	\$ 6.00
	427 - 851	\$ 11.00		1,007 - 2,011	\$ 11.00		1,587 - 3,171	\$ 11.00		2,167 - 4,331	\$ 11.00
	852 - 1,064	\$ 14.00		2,012 - 2,514	\$ 14.00		3,172 - 3,964	\$ 14.00		4,332 - 5,414	\$ 14.00
	1,065 - 1,277	\$ 17.00		2,515 - 3,017	\$17.00		3,965 - 4,757	\$ 17.00		5,415 – 6,497	\$ 17.00
	1,278 - 1,489	\$ 20.00		3,018 - 3,519	\$ 20.00		4,758 - 5,549	\$20.00		6,498 - 7,579	\$20.00
2	\$ 0 - 571	\$ 6.00	6	\$ 0 - 1,151	\$ 6.00	10	\$ 0 - 1,731	\$ 6.00	14	\$ 0 - 2,311	\$ 6.00
	572 - 1,141	\$ 11.00		1,152 - 2,301	\$ 11.00		1,732 - 3,461	\$ 11.00		2,312 - 4,621	\$ 11.00
	1,142 - 1,426	\$ 14.00		2,302 - 2,876	\$ 14.00		3,462 - 4,326	\$ 14.00		4,622 - 5,776	\$ 14.00
	1,427 - 1,712	\$ 17.00		2,877 - 3,452	\$ 17.00		4,327 - 5,192	\$ 17.00		5,777 - 6,932	\$ 17.00
	1,713 – 1,997	\$ 20.00		3,453 - 4,027	\$ 20.00		5,193 - 6,057	\$ 20.00		6,933 - 8,087	\$ 20.00
3	\$ 0 - 716	\$ 6.00	7	\$ 0 - 1,296	\$ 6.00	11	\$ 0 - 1,876	\$ 6.00	15	\$ 0 - 2,456	\$ 6.00
	717 - 1,431	\$ 11.00		1,297 - 2,591	\$ 11.00		1,877 - 3,751	\$ 11.00		2,457 - 4,911	\$ 11.00
	1,432 - 1,789	\$ 14.00		2,592 - 3,239	\$ 14.00		3,752 - 4,689	\$ 14.00		4,912 - 6,139	\$ 14.00
	1,790 - 2,147	\$ 17.00		3,240 - 3,887	\$ 17.00		4,690 - 5,627	\$ 17.00		6,140 - 7,367	\$ 17.00
	2,148 - 2,504	\$ 20.00		3,888 - 4,534	\$ 20.00		5,628 - 6,564	\$ 20.00		7,368 - 8,594	\$ 20.00
4	\$ 0 - 861	\$ 6.00	8	\$ 0 - 1,441	\$ 6.00	12	\$ 0 - 2,021	\$ 6.00	16	\$ 0 - 2,601	\$ 6.00
	862 - 1,721	\$ 11.00		1,442 - 2,881	\$ 11.00		2,022 - 4,041	\$ 11.00		2,602 - 5,201	\$ 11.00
	1,722 - 2,151	\$ 14.00		2,882 - 3,601	\$ 14.00		4,042 - 5,051	\$ 14.00		5,202 - 6,501	\$ 14.00
	2,152 - 2,582	\$ 17.00		3,602 - 4,322	\$ 17.00		5,052 - 6,062	\$ 17.00		6,502 - 7,802	\$ 17.00
	2,583 - 3,012	\$ 20.00		4,323 - 5,042	\$ 20.00		6,063 - 7,072	\$ 20.00		7,803 - 9,102	\$ 20.00

Effective 10/1/07 Note: The client fee is per child per week.

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**ATTACHMENT 4.1.1**  
**ABC CHILD CARE APPLICATION**  
**ABC CHILD CARE VOUCHER SYSTEM**

**FOR CHILDREN FROM BIRTH THROUGH TWELVE YEARS OLD ONLY**

**Do you have children under the age of twelve years old?**

***Do you need child care because all adults in your household are working or attending school or a training program?***

**Is your family income no more than shown below?**

If you answered “yes” to all three questions, you may want to complete this application to find out if financial assistance for child care is available for you.

Number of people in family (count parent(s) and children)	Income levels to qualify for ABC Child Care			
	Hourly Wage	Weekly Income	Monthly Income	Annual Income
1	\$6.90	\$276	\$1,196	\$14,355
2	\$9.25	\$370	\$1,604	\$19,245
3	\$11.60	\$464	\$2,011	\$24,135
4	\$13.98	\$559	\$2,419	\$29,025
5	\$16.33	\$653	\$2,826	\$33,915
6	\$18.68	\$747	\$3,234	\$38,805
7	\$21.03	\$841	\$3,641	\$43,695
8	\$23.38	\$935	\$4,049	\$48,585

The number of people in the family includes the adults and children related by blood or law who live in the same house. If you have more than 8 people in your family, please call 1-800-476-0199 for assistance. If your hourly or weekly income is slightly higher than the amounts on the chart above, you may still qualify. Go ahead and complete the application.

***Please note: If you are receiving a Family Independence (FI) stipend (Welfare check), you must apply for child care through your county Department of Social***

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**Services.** The ABC Child Care Voucher System **WILL NOT** pay for any child(ren) who are served prior to or after written service authorization by the ABC Control Center.

**Application for ABC Voucher System Child Care Assistance**

<b>1. Tell us who you are and where you live.</b>				
Your Last Name:		Your First Name:		Middle Initial:      Home Phone Number: (      )
Mailing Address:		City:		State:      Zip Code:
County You Live In:	Your Race:	Your Birth date:		Your Sex:      Your Social Security Number:
Your Family Composition: (Circle One)  Single Parent      Two Parent Guardian		Your Educational Level: (Circle One)  Less Than High School Graduate      High School Graduate      GED Post Graduate		

<b>2. Tell us who lives in your house. (List your name on the first line)</b>						
Last Name	First Name	Middle Initial	Sex	Race	Date of Birth	How is this person related to you?

<b>3. Tell us how much income your family has and if you work or attend school or training.</b>			
<i>Fill in the amount of money you make. Enter GROSS pay, not take home pay.</i> <i>If you are married, you must also fill in the amount of money your spouse makes.</i> <i>If you are not married, but living with your child(ren)'s other parent, you must also provide the information below on the other parent.</i> <i>Enter zero (0) if you or your spouse have no earned income.</i> <i>If you or your spouse attend school or training, fill in the name of the school/training program.</i>			
<b>1.2    <u>Your Work/School/Training Information</u></b>		<b>2    Spouse or Other Parent's Work/School/Training Information</b>	
How much do you earn? \$	How often are you paid? (Circle One)  Hourly      Weekly Monthly      Yearly	How much do you earn? \$	How often are you paid? (Circle One)  Hourly      Weekly Monthly      Yearly
How many hours do you work each week?	How many hours do you attend school or training each week?	How many hours do you work each week?	How many hours do you attend school or training each week?

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Name of Employer:	Name of School/Training Program:	Name of Employer:	Name of School/Training Program:
Street Address of Employer:	Street Address of School or Training Program:	Street Address of Employer:	<i>Street Address of School or Training Program:</i>
City/State/Zip Code of Employer:	City/State/Zip Code of School or Training Program:	City/State/Zip Code of Employer:	City/State/Zip Code of School or Training Program:
Contact Person at Work:	Contact Person at School/Training:	Contact Person at Work:	Contact Person at School/Training:
Contact Person's Phone Number: (       )	Contact Person's Phone Number: (       )	Contact Person's Phone Number: Number"	Contact Person's Phone Number: (       )

**4. Tell us if you have any other income.**

*List any additional income you or your family members living with you may have from the sources listed below, and tell us how often you get this income (for example, once each week, every three months, once a year, etc.) If you have no additional income, please indicate "none".*

Source	Amount	How Often	Who Gets this Money?
Family Independence Stipend			
Alimony			
Child Support			
Social Security			
Unemployment			
Disability Income			
Workman's Compensation			
Veteran's Pension			
Other			
<b>Total Income from all sources</b>			

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**5. Tell us about the children who need child care services.**

*Eligible children will be authorized for up to 52 weeks of child care services.*

*If your child is under 5 years old, you may need 52 weeks of full-time care.*

***If your child is 5 years old, and attends public school for part of the day, you may need 14 weeks of full-time care for the Summer, Winter, and Spring breaks, and 38 weeks of half-time care while the child is in school.***

Child's First Name	Child's Social Security Number:	Child's Age	U.S. Citizen?		Immunizations up-to-date? *		Number of Weeks of Care Requested	
			Yes	No	Yes	No	Full Time	Half Time

\* Checking no under immunizations up-to-date does not automatically disqualify your child.

**6. Attach proof of your employment or school/training program.**

*We need proof of your income and your spouse's or child's second parent's income. Attach copies of pay stubs from the last four weeks to this application. If you or your spouse or your child's second parent attend school or a training program, attach a copy of the schedule and proof of paid registration for the term during which you are applying for services. If you are not sure what to send, call 1-800-476-0199 and we will help you. **Your application will not be processed if you fail to submit proof of income and/or your school/training schedule.***

**Please read the following Applicant Rights and Responsibilities:**

<b>APPLICANT RESPONSIBILITIES:</b>	<b>APPLICANT RIGHTS:</b>
1. Provide current and accurate verification of gross family income, family size, age of child(ren), and employment/school/training.  2. Report all changes in gross family income, family size, address, employment, school, or training within 10 calendar days after the change occurs.  3. Pay weekly client fee based on family size and income to provider before service delivery. Parents are responsible for the difference between the maximum amount the ABC Program pays and what the provider charges.  4. Pay for child care services when an appeal are in process.  5. Get approval from the ABC Child Care Control Center before transferring to another provider.  6. Give advance notice before terminating services.  7. Choose a child care provider within 15 calendar days from the date of notification of eligibility.  8. Comply with ABC Child Care Program attendance policies in using child care services.  9. Pay for services received before or after the authorized dates of service.	1. Choose a center, family day care home, group day care home, church facility, or care by a neighbor, friend, or relative. Clients receiving services under Child Protective Services or Foster Care can choose only licensed facilities or programs.  2. You have the right to receive a fair hearing regarding any decision that results in the denial or termination of services, provided that the decision is not due to funding. Notice of appeal shall be in writing to <b><u>Individual and Provider Rights, SCDSS, P.O. Box 1520, Columbia, South Carolina, 29202-1520.</u></b>  3. Make complaints or discuss areas of concern/suggestions regarding the ABC System by calling 1-800-763-2223.  4. Visit your child(ren) any time he or she is in the provider's care.

**NOTE: Failure to comply with these Responsibilities could result in services being denied or terminated.**

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**7. By my signature below,**

*I certify that all of the information I have provided is true and correct. I understand that state officials may verify the information and that deliberate misrepresentation may subject me to prosecution under applicable State and Federal criminal statutes. I further understand that upon my approval for this program, I will be assessed a fee based on the information I have provided. I agree, by my signature, to pay that fee according to the terms and conditions of the approved child care provider. I further certify that I have read the Applicant Rights and Responsibilities and will comply with the Responsibilities.*

Signature of Parent:	Date:
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**COPIES OF THIS APPLICATION WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**

**Please remit application to:**

ABC Form 100, 4/18/06

ABC Child Care Voucher System  
Post Office Box 100160  
Columbia, South Carolina 29202-3160

Si usted desea esta aplicación en español, llámé 1-800-476-0199, por favor.

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**ATTACHMENT 6.4.3**

South Carolina Department of Social Services  
ABC Child Care Voucher System  
**SELF-ARRANGED CHILD CARE PARENT CERTIFICATION**

The Self-Arranged Child Care Certification is required for approval of your caregiver in the ABC Child Care Voucher System. Both you and the caregiver must sign this form and date it. You must fill in all blanks. This form acts as a certification of services between you and your caregiver. (\* The starred items are required for approval of your caregiver.)

Parent Name:	Parent Social Security Number:
*Caregiver Name:	Caregiver Social Security Number:
*Caregiver Address: (list the physical address of the caregiver's residence)	
Caregiver Mailing Address: (list the caregiver's mailing address)	
*Is the caregiver 21 years old or older?	*Will the caregiver allow the parents to see the child(ren) at any time while they are in care?

Names and ages of my children needing a caregiver.

Child's Full Name	Age of Child	Child's Birth Date

\* My child(ren) are age appropriately immunized based on the attached "Recommended Childhood Immunization Schedule." ☐ Yes ☐ No Please review carefully.

My child will receive care: (check one)

- ☐ In the home of the child      ☐ In a friend's home  
☐ In a neighbor's home      ☐ In a family member's home  
☐ Other (explain) \_\_\_\_\_

List below the total number of children who will be in the home.

Caregiver's Children:	Caregiver's Family Member's Children:
Other Children:	Total Number of All Children:

Is there at least one adult per six children? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Caregiver is related to my child(ren). ☐ Yes ☐ No

Check One: ☐ Parent ☐ Grandparent ☐ Great-grandparent ☐ Uncle ☐ Aunt  
☐ Sibling by marriage, blood, court decree of adoption who lives outside the home of the child.

Other: (How is child related?) \_\_\_\_\_

There will be other adults or teenagers present in the home. ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, explain: \_\_\_\_\_



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The house in which my child will receive care:

Yes      No

is clean.		
is danger free.		
has enough exits in case of fire.		
has safe vented heater/fireplaces.		
* has smoke detector and fire extinguishers.		
has a way to keep food from spoiling.		
has a safety plan to follow if there is danger.		
has running water from an approved water supply (public water or Health Department must OK well).		
has clean bathrooms.		
has equipment, toys and supplies in good shape.		
has safety cap on electrical outlets.		
has enough heat, light and air.		
has a first aid kit.		
has strong screens or bars on windows above the first floor.		
has a safe place to play outdoors with no litter.		
has a bed or mat for every child.		

The caregiver will provide the following:

Breakfast	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Morning Snack	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Lunch	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Afternoon Snack	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Dinner	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Evening Snack	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Indoor Activities	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Outdoor Activities	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Toys	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Games	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Play Things	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	** Crib	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
** Crib slats no more than 2 3/8 inches apart for children under 2 years old.			

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My caregiver and I agree:

about child rearing.

☐ Yes ☐ No

about how to reward and punish my child.

☐ Yes ☐ No

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

My caregiver knows not to deprive my child of food, naps or the bathroom. ☐ Yes ☐ No

My caregiver:

knows how to reach me in an emergency.

☐ Yes ☐ No

has access to a car in an emergency.

☐ Yes ☐ No

has the name of my child's doctor in an emergency.

☐ Yes ☐ No

Days and hours I need child care:

Monday      Begin: \_\_\_\_\_ End: \_\_\_\_\_

Tuesday      Begin: \_\_\_\_\_ End: \_\_\_\_\_

Wednesday      Begin: \_\_\_\_\_ End: \_\_\_\_\_

Thursday      Begin: \_\_\_\_\_ End: \_\_\_\_\_

Friday      Begin: \_\_\_\_\_ End: \_\_\_\_\_

Saturday      Begin: \_\_\_\_\_ End: \_\_\_\_\_

Sunday      Begin: \_\_\_\_\_ End: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Caregiver's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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**For Agency Use Only:**

Remarks or Further Follow-up Needed: \_\_\_\_\_

APPROVAL: ☐ Yes ☐ No Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_